

PAWSCHICAGO®

magazine

WINTER 2022/2023

A photograph of two women, Paula and Alexis Fasseas, smiling and holding a dog and a kitten. Paula, on the left, has blonde hair and is wearing a black top. Alexis, on the right, has brown hair and is wearing a grey top. They are both holding a small, light brown dog with a white patch on its face. Alexis is also holding a small, grey and white kitten. The background is a bright, indoor setting with large windows.

25 YEARS of Lifesaving Work

CELEBRATING FOUNDERS
PAULA AND ALEXIS FASSEAS
AND ALL THE ANIMAL LOVERS,
SUPPORTERS, AND PETS WHO
HAVE CHANGED OUR CITY

**92.5% Reduction In Annual
Chicago Euthanasia**

77,000 Adoptions

300,000 Spay/Neuter Surgeries

Save Lives For Lifetimes to Come.

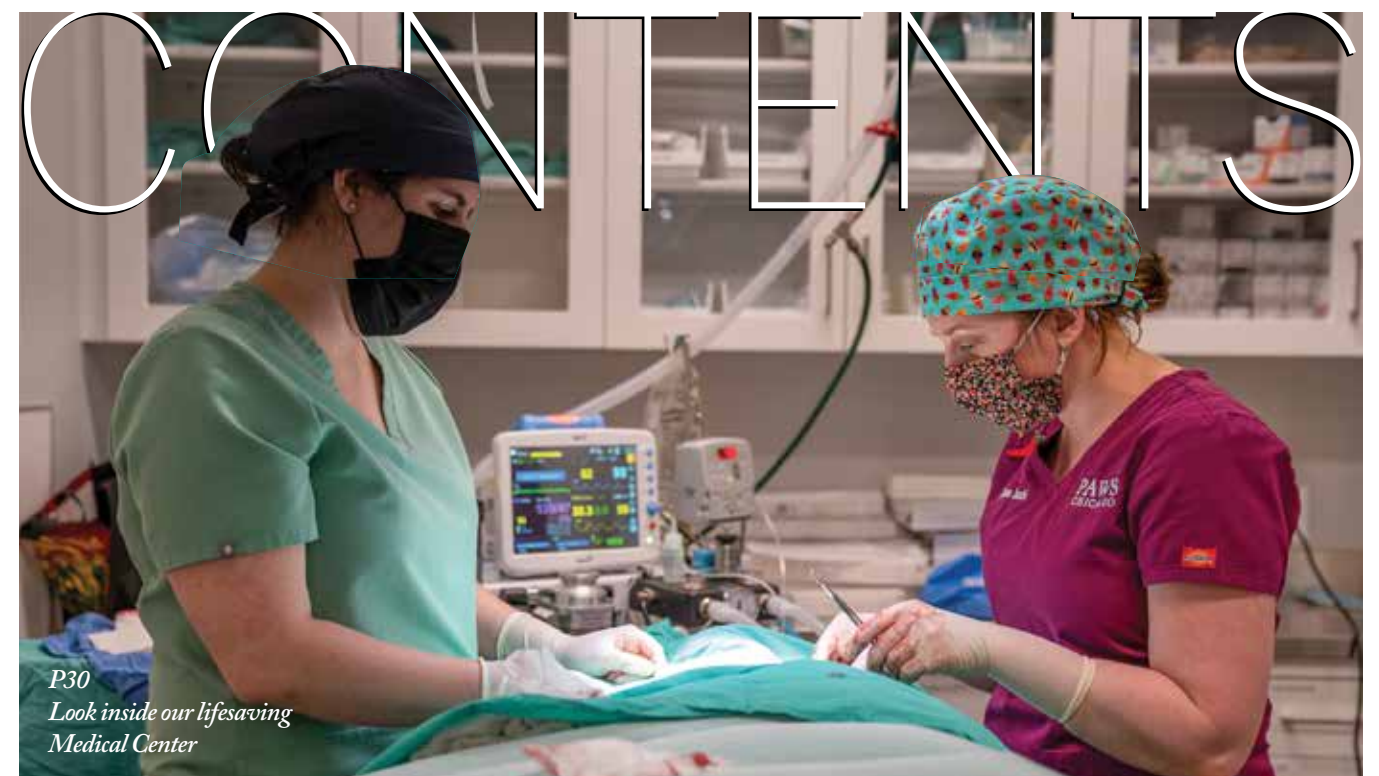


Remember the dogs, cats, puppies, and kittens
of PAWS Chicago in your estate plans.

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

PAWSCHICAGO®
Guardian Angel

For more information, please call Betsy Moore
at 773-475-3320 or visit
pawschicago.org/GuardianAngel



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Medical Center

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COVER AND 25TH ANNIVERSARY FEATURE PHOTO: Dan Busta

Thank you to our wonderful photo contributors who helped make this 25th Anniversary Edition so special.
The photos collected throughout the years have documented the priceless memories of PAWS Chicago.



DEAR FRIENDS,

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, PAWS STARTED WITH A SIMPLE IDEA: to reduce the number of homeless and at-risk pets in the Chicago area. At that point, it was impossible to ignore what was happening in our community — in 1997, more than 42,000 pets were put to death. We knew that with the right efforts, we could save at least a few of those innocent lives.

That simple idea has grown into a bona fide movement. Since we founded PAWS, we've reduced the number of pets killed by 92.5 percent through both robust adoption and spay/neuter programs. We've expanded our state-of-the-art medical facilities, offering the best possible veterinary care to at-risk animals across the city. We've raised awareness about the realities facing homeless pets. And we've helped foster a community of animal lovers, bringing together caring, compassionate people who share a common dedication to a common cause: to find loving homes for every innocent pet.

This issue of *PAWS Chicago Magazine* takes a fond look back at the last 25 years of our organization. We tell the story of PAWS, sharing our journey as we've grown and evolved (page 12). There's a look back at some of the supporters who have helped PAWS through the years (page 22). We also look at more recent initiatives like the expansion of our Medical Center, and share photos that document a day onsite (page 30).

Since we started PAWS, our No Kill promise has stayed the same. But the problems facing today's homeless pets have evolved. We know that No Kill is the solution and with your help, we'll continue to find loving homes for animals who need us most.

This year, we also lost my husband, Peter Fasseas. Peter was undoubtedly my No.1 supporter through the years, and this organization would not be what it is today without his love, compassion and devotion. You'll find our daughter's memorial to him on page 44. His memory will live on with every adoption, every medical procedure, every step we take as we continue our mission.

Thank you for your continued dedication to animals. With your help, we can be there for them, in whatever way they need us.

Warmest regards,

Paula Fasseas

Paula Fasseas
Founder and Executive Chair



GET IN TOUCH

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THE PAWS CHICAGO DEBIT CARD

Only available with
TOTAL ACCESS CHECKING

\$100 required to open.

We believe pets are worth saving. We also believe in giving back to our community because we're not just in it; we're part of it. That's why we're proud to announce our partnership with PAWS Chicago, one of the nation's leading animal welfare organizations located right here in our area. It's just one of the ways we're able to give back to our community and protect the four-legged friends who enrich our lives every day. And, many of our bank locations are pet friendly, so stop by for a treat and see how you can open an account today!



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- 1) Enroll in online banking and activate e-statements through the bank website.
- 2) Complete a direct deposit each month for the qualification period.
- 3) Order a PAWS Chicago debit card³ at account opening.

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TO REDEEM THE \$100 DONATION | **WFCPC00TA100**

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ABOUT

PAWSCHICAGO®

PAWS CHICAGO'S NO KILL MODEL

PAWS Chicago's lifesaving success is rooted in the No Kill model, which can be replicated in any community. Since 1997, when PAWS Chicago was founded, the city has seen euthanasia drop by more than 92.5 percent. Much of this advancement is attributable to PAWS Chicago's innovative and solutions-oriented programs directed at eliminating pet overpopulation, saving lives and ensuring that pets not only survive, but thrive.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The foundation of all lifesaving is community engagement. By raising awareness about pet homelessness and engaging people in lifesaving efforts, we are making lasting change for animals.

LIFESAVING PROGRAMS

PAWS Chicago's mission-critical programs — our No Kill pillars — sit atop this foundation. These are the robust programs that are necessary to build a No Kill community.

PREVENTION

The majority of stray, feral, and unwanted pets originate in under-resourced communities. Through prevention efforts like high-volume free and low-cost spay/neuter and community outreach in underserved communities, PAWS Chicago directly reduces pet overpopulation. **15,000-plus animals spayed/neutered annually**

ADOPTION

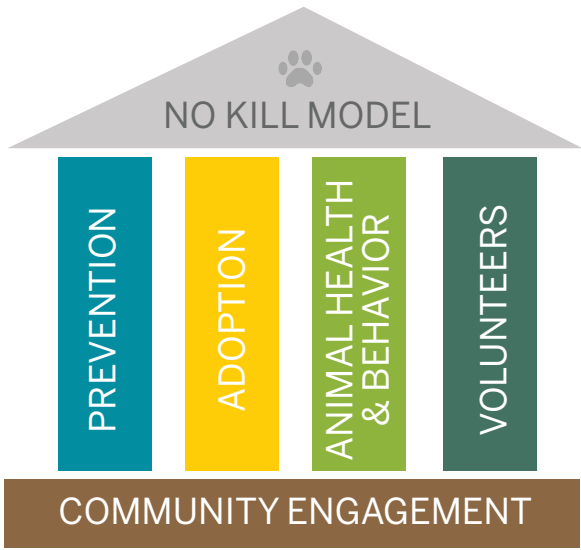
Rescuing homeless pets and uniting them with their new, loving families is at the forefront of saving lives. **5,000 pets adopted yearly**

ANIMAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR

No Kill means being a safe haven for animals, no matter where they come from or how much rehabilitation they need. Through PAWS Chicago's state-of-the-art shelter medicine program, each pet receives full medical treatment and rehabilitation. **More than 98 percent saved**

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are essential to saving lives. Without this impassioned and charitable labor force, the scale and quality of PAWS Chicago's lifesaving work would not be possible. Volunteer work provides the equivalent of more than 48 full-time employees. **100,000-plus volunteer hours**



HOW YOU CAN HELP

ADOPT

Meet pets in need of loving homes.
pawschicago.org/adopt

DONATE

Help an animal in need today.
pawschicago.org/donate

VOLUNTEER

Donate your time. Volunteer or foster to save lives.
pawschicago.org/volunteer
pawschicago.org/foster

CONNECT

Become a part of our lifesaving community.
pawschicago.org
facebook.com/pawschicago
[@pawschicago](https://twitter.com/pawschicago)



MEDICAL CENTER GRAND OPENING

On November 3, 2021, we marked the opening of our new Medical Center in Little Village with a ribbon-cutting event. The afternoon featured remarks from PAWS Chicago founder Paula Fasseas and 22nd Ward Alderperson Michael D. Rodriguez. Guests also received a tour of the new Center, learned more about veterinary medicine, and met the Center's four-legged residents.

This 30,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art Medical Center is the largest and most advanced hospital for homeless pets in the United States. With nine vets, 29 technicians and assistants and dozens of care specialists, the center helps PAWS Chicago address next-level needs for our city's most under-resourced communities and neediest homeless pets, while helping animals from 13 states where pets are most at risk of euthanasia.



SPAY DAY MARATHON

On Saturday, October 29, PAWS Chicago took our No Kill mission to the next level. Our 30,000-square-foot Medical Center was transformed into the headquarters for our FIRST-EVER Spay Day Marathon, where we performed surgery on more than 300 pets in a single day. Our focus is prevention of homeless pet euthanasia, and offering high-volume, free and low-cost spay and neuter is the key. PAWS Chicago is on track to perform more than 15,000 of these procedures in 2022, and remains the city's only organization offering high volume spay/neuter to under-resourced communities.



FOUR-STAR FROM CHARITY NAVIGATOR

For the 19th consecutive year, PAWS Chicago has received the highest four-star designation from Charity Navigator, the top national evaluator of charity organizations.

This distinction is extra-special, as less than 1 percent of charities have ever received four stars for 19 consecutive years, meaning PAWS Chicago outperforms most nonprofit organizations in the country.

PAWS Chicago could not accomplish our essential work without our generous supporters. Our community members knowing that their donations are efficiently and effectively managed to save the most lives possible is what has enabled PAWS Chicago's rapid growth, building a comprehensive solution to pet overpopulation.



MAKING A CAMEO

Last winter, musician Billy Corgan and his partner, Chloe Mendel, raised nearly \$30,000 for PAWS Chicago through a special Cameo fundraiser and holiday concert. The Cameo campaign allowed fans to purchase personalized messages from the rocker and his partner, while the concerts featured Corgan performing at his Highland Park tea shop, Madame Zuzu's. One hundred percent of proceeds from both initiatives benefited PAWS Chicago.



PAWS CELEBRATES FIRST EVER GIVING DAY

The PAWS community proclaimed Pets Are Worth Saving on PAWS Chicago's first ever Giving Day, June 23. Hundreds of donors and supporters shared their Promise to Homeless Pets throughout the day. Fox 32 Chicago and FM 101.9 THE MIX helped spread the word as our extraordinary media sponsors.

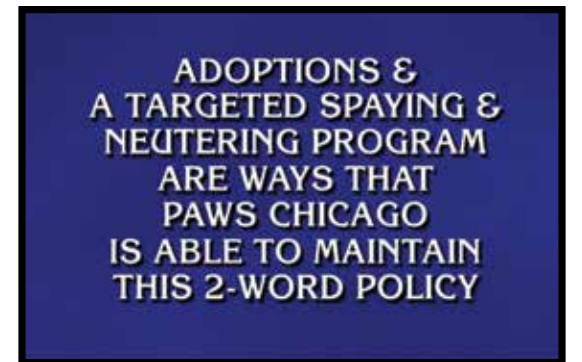


BEST OF CHICAGO

PAWS Chicago scooped up the Best Pet Adoption/Shelter award in the *Chicago Reader* "Best of Chicago" 2022 poll. Community support is essential to our mission, and we're honored that Chicagoans have taken notice of our work saving the lives of homeless pets.

PAWS FEATURED ON JEOPARDY

Last November 12, the same night as our annual Fur Ball, PAWS Chicago was featured in a question on *Jeopardy!* Host Ken Jennings asked competitors, "Which two-word policy is PAWS Chicago able to maintain through adoptions and a targeted spay and neuter program?" The answer: What is No Kill?



MULTICULTURAL VETERINARY MEDICINE ASSOCIATION AWARD

PAWS Chicago was honored to receive the Multicultural Veterinary Medicine Association's DEI Commitment to Change award. The organization specifically applauded our Veterinary Assistant Apprenticeship Program, which provides pathways to employment in the industry to underserved populations. This program allows residents of Englewood, West Englewood, and Back of the Yards to learn the skills needed to become a veterinary assistant, all while helping neighborhood pets through our Community Medicine programs.



LEADING PAWS CHICAGO INTO THE FUTURE

Nothing is more important than strong leadership to ensure PAWS Chicago remains mission-focused on building No Kill communities and continues to innovate and respond as the problems that homeless animals face rapidly evolve. PAWS welcomes these three exceptional leaders to our team.

Susanna Wickham, Chief Executive Officer & Chief Community Engagement Officer



“I had my eye on Susanna for years, hoping that one day we could recruit her at PAWS,” recalls Paula Fasseas. “With a rare combination of business leadership, entrepreneurialism, unparalleled communications expertise, a long history of being integrated into our Chicago community, and a passion for animals, she was the perfect fit.”

After five years as Editor in Chief and Publisher of *Chicago Magazine* rounding out a 20-year career in Chicago media, Susanna answered the call from Paula knowing she was ready for a second act; her love for a PAWS rescue pup named Gus had ignited her passion for the mission in 2013. Susanna officially joined PAWS Chicago in June 2021. “I always knew someday I would be at PAWS, but I expected it to be as a volunteer when I retired,” Susanna said. “Having it happen 20 years ahead of schedule is something I never imagined. But I couldn’t have envisioned a more perfect transition into a role that is deeply fulfilling.”

And Susanna jumped right in, bringing her love of animals, people and Chicago together in each and every day. From expanding PAWS relationships and partnerships to coordinating Hurricane Ian rescue missions, heading to the heart of the devastation in Florida just days after impact this fall to rescue animals in need, Susanna is making a huge impact for the animals and PAWS. “Telling the animals’ stories and engaging new communities in the mission is the most impactful work I’ve ever done,” she said.



Kristina Rosinia, Chief Operating Officer

By day Kristina Rosinia was Managing Director of Registries and Data Science at the the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, using her operational and information science expertise and Masters in Public Health to solve complex problems and improve patient care nationally. By night, she was a canine behavior trainer and instructor at the PAWS Chicago Training Center, helping people improve communications with their pets to ensure successful adoptions.

Then she saw a job posting about the Chief Operating Officer position at PAWS. “I never thought there would be a position where I could integrate my business career with my personal passion for animals,” she said.

From running foster programs as a volunteer, to creating enrichment and fear-free protocols for rescues, developing agility and nosework programs for Animal Care & Control, and fostering hundreds of animals personally, Kristina has been volunteering in animal welfare for most of her life, driven by whatever was needed most to stop euthanasia. “That’s why I began pursuing certifications in training,” Kristina said. “I knew that animals with behavior issues were the most likely to be euthanized and I wanted to make the biggest impact I could with my free time.”

Her robust background in feline and canine behavior, including being a Karen Pryor Academy Certified Training Partner, Certified Professional Dog Trainer – Knowledge Assessed, American Kennel Club Evaluator, Association of Professional Dog Trainer Professional Member, International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants Member, and Humane Alliance of Rescue Trainers member has created a huge impact since she joined PAWS full-time in August 2021. By prioritizing animals’ needs, instituting behavior modification plans, and providing strong leadership, the average length of stay for PAWS pets has declined by 55 percent, which has allowed PAWS to save more animals—increasing its intake by 22 percent. She’s also streamlined the spay/neuter clinic operations to increase surgical output by over 28 percent in her first year.

“One of the greatest challenges in animal welfare is merging animal and business expertise. Typically, those skill sets are in different people, leading to communications and prioritization challenges,” said Fasseas. “Kristina’s ability to delve deep into the granular needs of each pet while also keeping focus on our overall mission of saving the most lives possible is an incredible asset in ensuring we are optimizing lifesaving.”

Dr. Alycia Eisenstein, Director of Spay & Neuter Surgery

Dr. Eisenstein comes from a close-knit family of human and animal doctors, with her obstetrician father modeling the importance of high-quality care and dedication to your patients. She has had an extensive career as a veterinarian from owning her own practice to flying around the world to be a surgeon for large-scale spay-a-thons. In 2021, she began working at PAWS as a relief surgeon and the team was impressed with her talents, both as a surgeon and a teacher. She has a unique blend of surgical expertise and a collaborative demeanor that brings up everyone around her. “Dr. Eisenstein encourages our entire team to be better and to help more animals every day,” said Kristina Rosinia, Chief Operating Officer.



In early 2022, Dr. Eisenstein came on formally as the PAWS Chicago Director of Spay & Neuter Surgery. In this role, she has implemented new protocols to improve the efficiency and safety of every surgery we do. In addition to completing thousands of surgeries personally, she leads our surgical review process, ensuring we consistently follow the most up-to-date protocols. “Providing high-quality care is the key to everything we do at PAWS, and we embrace the latest in science and best practice,” said Eisenstein.

Under Dr. Eisenstein’s leadership, PAWS recently organized its first-ever Spay Day Marathon, in one day providing 300 animals with spay/neuter surgeries from PAWS focus areas, including Little Village, Back of the Yards, and Englewood. “We had a line around the block and our enthusiastic team worked all day to ensure that every animal who came to us left with the medical care they needed, at low or no cost to the owners. This event truly exhibited the PAWS mission,” said Fasseas.



25 Years of Lifesaving Work

FOUNDERS PAULA & ALEXIS FASSEAS LOOK BACK AT THE **PROFOUND CHANGE** IN ANIMAL WELFARE, AND THE **DECISIONS** THAT MADE IT POSSIBLE.

By Molly Each

“If those of us who love animals don’t help them, who will?”

Those words ignited something in Paula Fasseas. They were uttered in 1996 by her then high-school-aged daughter, Alexis. And when she heard them, Paula realized that she must, in fact, do something.

Sometimes, the simplest questions can spark a revolution.

In 1996, Chicago killed more than 42,000 pets and the city’s animal welfare organizations had an 84 percent euthanasia rate — the highest in the country. Chicago Animal Care & Control, the city impoundment facility, killed more than 9 out of 10 of the pets who came to them.

The large private humane society was only slightly better, killing 6 out of 10 pets that entered.

“The great travesty was that no one was aware of what was happening,” Fasseas remembers. “Everyone I knew purchased pets from breeders and had no idea there was a homeless pet crisis.”

Paula soon found the reason people were in the dark about homeless pets: existing shelters did not want to talk about the crisis. They had been killing for so many years it was part of their operation, and they were afraid they would be blamed by the public.

More than 42,000 pets killed in the city—an 84 percent euthanasia rate.

If those of us who love animals don’t help them, who will?

The thought echoed in Paula’s mind, nudging her to action. She didn’t know at the time, but what she did over those over a few days and weeks in 1996 would become a tidal wave of change for homeless animals, both in Chicago and beyond.

25 YEARS TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Today, the numbers are still staggering, but for all the right reasons. Since 1997, PAWS Chicago has found homes for more than 77,000 pets, performed nearly 300,000 free or low cost spay/neuter surgeries, and annually serves an average of 25,000 homeless and at-risk pets. PAWS now operates a state-of-the-art Medical Center—the largest homeless pet hospital in the country—and saves 98 percent of the animals who enter the program. Perhaps the most important number: euthanasia in Chicago is down 92.5 percent since PAWS’ inception.

And the lifesaving work continues. After all, if those of us who love animals don’t help them, who will?

At right: Paula and Alexis Fasseas at the PAWS Chicago Lincoln Park Adoption Center



SINCE PAWS CHICAGO'S FOUNDING IN 1997



77,000
pets saved and
adopted into
loving homes



92.5% reduction
in pets killed in our city each
year since PAWS Chicago's
founding in 1997

300,000
Spay/neuter
surgeries
performed





Alexis Fasseas and Paula Fasseas working one of the organization's first adoption events in 1998

THE SEEDS OF NO KILL

In 1996 a friend in San Francisco began sending Paula articles about a new way of sheltering that was taking root. Paula and her husband, Peter, flew across the country to learn more.

The Fasseases traveled to San Francisco and met with Richard Avancino, who was at the helm of the San Francisco SPCA. He began describing how, when he took over, he stopped permitting euthanasia for anything beyond end-of-life or dangerous behavior. Instead, they began to manage their admissions.

As private organizations, humane societies do not have to take in a surplus of animals; they can instead take in those they can save, triaging to help the most critical cases. Then, with proactive spay/neuter programs in underserved communities, the oversupply of homeless pets can be mitigated. He described the backbone of what would become the No Kill movement.

"Everything he said about No Kill made so much sense," Paula says. "It is the private sector that holds the solution and is able to implement lifesaving programs. The government becomes the clearinghouse and is better equipped to handle animals that may be dangerous. Through transparency and raising awareness about the killing, people and rescue organizations rise to the challenge."

SPREADING THE WORD

Paula returned from San Francisco further impassioned to raise awareness in the Chicago community. She knew that if the public could actually see the animals at the pound and understand the fate they faced, they'd be inspired to adopt and support this movement. She began developing a concept to bring homeless animals to the Michigan Avenue and Oak Street shopping districts.

At her son's school event, she ran into Marlena Peleo-Lazar, an

executive at Ogilvy & Mather, who took on the project pro bono, generating creative branding for Angels with Tails. In May 1998, invited shelters brought homeless pets to participating luxury stores while friends handed out brochures to passersby, alerting people to the fact that 42,000 animals were euthanized in Chicago every year.

Paula was persistent and reached out to the Director of Chicago Animal Care & Control multiple times requesting permission to bring homeless pets from the city pound to the event. And finally, on the third call, the director acquiesced with the comment, "Go ahead and take them; we're just going to kill them anyway." It was the first time city pound pets were permitted to leave their cages, much less the building. After all, more than 26,000 of the 28,000 pets who entered that building left in body bags 1997.

"Our whole community of family and friends joined to work the event," Alexis says. "We didn't have an organization. It was all people we knew." Logistically the event was complicated: Once people picked out a pet, the volunteers would drive both the person and the pet back to the pound to fill out the adoption paperwork and take them home. But the event was a success with 100 animals adopted. Even more important, the next day Paula fielded more than 50 calls from people who wanted to get involved. But even more, the news media showed up to cover the event and spread the word about what was happening to homeless pets behind closed doors.

STARTING SMALL

In the early days, PAWS Chicago was a completely grassroots organization. Paula and Alexis worked on direct mail campaigns together at their kitchen table. Peter and Paula owned Metropolitan Bank Group, which became the largest privately held bank group in Chicago, and Paula used every spare space in their buildings that she could, welcoming volunteers to run an adoption center on

nights and weekends out of an empty storefront next to the Clark Street branch, and building the Lurie Spay/Neuter Clinic in an unused area in the Little Village location.

"I think that the single most important thing that PAWS has done is simply talking about the reality that animals faced," Alexis says.

To do that, Paula, Alexis, and a growing group of volunteers held adoption events, and also hit the pavement across the city, educating the public and helping people to actually spay and neuter their pets. "We would drive to underserved neighborhoods, walk around and talk to people," says Suzanne Le Mignot, anchor and reporter at CBS-2, a longtime volunteer and member of the PAWS Chicago Board of Directors. "We would participate in parades, community events and literally did door-to-door service. We engaged people and told them about the importance of spay/neuter. Then, we would take their pets to get spayed or neutered, then bring the animal back. It was incredibly impactful." This approach would be cemented in 2014 as PAWS for Life, an initiative designed to bring spay/neuter to people's doorsteps when they could not arrange transportation to the Lurie Clinic.

They would also go into Chicago Public Schools to engage children with humane education, one of the first programs of its kind. Le Mignot remembers one boy named Alejandro from Ralph Bunche Elementary School in Englewood. Shortly after hearing the PAWS presentation at his school, he found two dogs tied to a garbage can with wire. The wire had severed one of the dogs' paws and it was dangling and bleeding profusely. Alejandro convinced a stranger to drive them back to his school, where PAWS was loading their van; through his actions, he saved their lives. "He told us he knew he could help and make a difference because of what we had said," Le Mignot says. PAWS later gave him an award for his efforts.

Additionally, they spread the message through collateral such as T-shirts and the ubiquitous yellow bandanas that identify a PAWS pet. While walking animals around Lincoln Park, volunteers would wear bright yellow T-shirts that said, "See me to adopt this dog."

"It was super grassroots," Alexis says. "We put posters in windows, wrote everything ourselves."

"No one knew how many animals were being euthanized, or what was happening," says Lindsay Carlton, one of PAWS Chicago's earliest volunteers and now a member of the Development Board. "Paula brought things into the public that people didn't want to know about. And if you don't know, how can you help?"

Top: Outside the PAWS Chicago Adoption Center on Clark Street circa 1998.
Middle: Paula Fasseas with her adopted dogs Daisy and Pippin in a Sun-Times article covering the first Angels with Tails event
Bottom: Suzanne Le Mignot, Kimberly Peek and Jennifer Whorf with Pixie at an early PAWS Chicago Run for Their Lives event.



The Catalyst

In 1996, Chicago's animal welfare organizations had an **84 percent euthanasia rate**—the highest in the country. PAWS Chicago was founded to change that.



PAWS founder Paula Fasseas holds living proof that Pets Are Worth Saving: Daisy and Pippin, stray dogs that her family adopted. Fasseas hopes Chicagoans will follow her example.

Stores to put doggies in windows



1996 Paula and Alexis Fasseas discover the disturbing truth about what was happening to pets in Chicago and founded PAWS Chicago.

1998 The first Angels with Tails adoption event on Chicago's Magnificent Mile; the first time homeless pets from Animal Control were taken off-site for an Adoption Event.

1998 Opened first boutique adoption center on Clark Street and began hosting weekend adoption events.

2000 Opened the Lurie Spay/Neuter Clinic in Little Village, providing high-volume, free and low-cost spay/neuter surgeries.



The Result

From **42,561 to 3,179**
a 92.5% reduction
in pets euthanized in our city
each year since PAWS
Chicago's founding in 1997

SPAY/NEUTER, SPAY/NEUTER

When looking at the pet overpopulation epidemic, it's the exponential breeding of pets that creates such a crisis. A simple spay/neuter surgery makes a huge impact, when using theoretical modeling, a single cat and her offspring can produce 420,000 cats in seven years and a single dog and her puppies can produce 67,000 dogs in six years.

"With tens of thousands of animals coming into shelters and being killed, we knew we could never adopt our way out of that problem. We needed to address pet overpopulation at its source. So that's where we started," Paula says.

She and Alexis toured the high-volume clinics in Las Vegas and Los Angeles to learn about the procedure and Paula began working with a veterinary architect to convert unused space at her 26th Street bank branch into a high-volume clinic.

"It's not just providing spay/neuter that is important, but providing spay/neuter to families who could not otherwise afford the \$300-plus procedure," Paula said. "We needed to provide the surgery to pets who would be breeding."

To determine where to locate the clinic, Paula gathered public data and tracked the ZIP codes that had the highest stray calls and the ZIP codes where the most pets came into Animal Care & Control. And the Metropolitan Bank branch with extra space was right in the sweet spot that would make the most impact, located just 1.5 miles from the city impoundment facility.

To raise the \$500,000 to pay for the construction, longtime animal lover Rhoda Pritzker offered her home to host an event. She invited her friends and other friends of animals in the community to learn about the Spay/Neuter Clinic plans. Philanthropist Ann Lurie attended and made the lead gift to name the Lurie Spay/Neuter Clinic.

Annually, the Lurie Clinic performs around 15,000 spay/neuter surgeries for free or at a low-cost. In early 2023, the Lurie Clinic will perform its 300,000th surgery since it opened its doors in November 2000.

PUTTING PAWS CHICAGO ON THE MAP – THE LINCOLN PARK ADOPTION CENTER

In 2007, PAWS opened the Pippen Fasseas Adoption Center—named when the Fasseas family made the lead gift in honor of their first rescued stray who had inspired Alexis to volunteer as a teen. In this warm, bright, welcoming space in Lincoln Park, visitors can walk through, meet the animals, watch them play in spacious, light-filled rooms, and find the special pet to bring home.



The Solution

Spay/Neuter surgery is the solution to ending euthanasia. In November 2000, the Lurie Clinic opened its doors and performs more than **15,000 surgeries a year.**

The Adoption Center brought homeless pets who were at risk of euthanasia into the fabric of daily life, putting them in front of where people live, work and play.

"The Adoption Center really ballooned our presence," Alexis says. "Because spay/neuter isn't glamorous or glorified, we weren't really well known at that point. Even though it's less efficient relative to spay/neuter, it's critical for PAWS to bring the face of pet homelessness to the community so that people connect with the No Kill mission. You fall in love with the animal, not with spay/neuter surgery."

In 2008, Oprah Winfrey made a surprise appearance at the Pippen Fasseas Adoption Center, broadcasting the importance of adopting rescue pets and supporting No Kill to a national audience. Suddenly, it was not only the right thing to do, but cool to adopt a rescue rather than going to a pet store filled with pets bred for profit.

Page 16 top: PAWS Chicago performs around 15,000 free and low cost spay/neuter surgeries each year at the Lurie Clinic, located in the Little Village neighborhood of Chicago.

This page: Top: In 2022, PAWS volunteers contributed nearly 100,000 hours of service, equal to 48 full-time employees. Right: Every year adopters welcome nearly 5,000 rescued PAWS pets into their hearts and homes.



2001 Governor Ryan signed the Humane Euthanasia in Animal Shelters Act at PAWS Chicago, setting new standards for euthanasia and effectively outlawing the gas chamber.

2005 Opened the Admissions & Recovery Center above the Lurie Clinic to care for sick and injured animals.

2007 Opened the cageless, 13,000-square-foot Pippen Fasseas Adoption Center in Lincoln Park, bringing state-of-the-art No Kill sheltering to Chicago.

2007 Charity Navigator placed PAWS Chicago on their Charity Hall of Fame national top 10 list at #4.



PAWS CHICAGO'S STRONG FOUNDATION: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

"I always thought our core driver was No Kill," Alexis says. "Our commitment to saving each and every pet is why we were founded, why we do what we do. But when we look at the trajectory of PAWS and what has made the biggest difference for animals, it turns out that our real roots are community engagement and community building. Of course, our mission is No Kill, but our organization's success is rooted in engaging so many people to become part of the solution, thereby creating a true movement."

Today, PAWS relies on the community and volunteers to deliver vital animal care, and help with fundraising, fostering, humane education, and community building. In 2022, PAWS volunteers are on pace to donate 100,000 hours, or the equivalent of 48 full-time employees.

But when the organization started, the volunteer work looked much different. As one of PAWS's earliest volunteers, serving regularly from 2003 to 2005, Carlton remembers the early days involved a lot of shuttling: loading up animals in makeshift crates and driving them from Animal Care & Control to Old Orchard and Woodfield malls for adoption events, then helping to get them adopted. "We were doing the best we could do bring in as many animals as we could and get them adopted."



The Movement

Community engagement is
the key to achieving and
maintaining a No Kill equilibrium.

**Thousands of adopters, fosters,
volunteers and supporters**
join the PAWS Community
every year.

Community engagement is the foundation of our No Kill model. Engaging the public in the cause of homeless animals has brought about transformational change in our 25 years. Thousands and thousands of animal lovers support PAWS through adoption, fostering, volunteering, attending events, and participating in our TEAM PAWS athletic program

One thing that has always struck Carlton is the way PAWS involves volunteers on a very integral level. They're not just taking up space; PAWS truly trusts and empowers their volunteers. "I had a major responsibility to transport those dogs and run the events," says Carlton. "But that's one thing I always found so special about PAWS, that they involve the community."

While PAWS volunteers are giving back to homeless pets, many say that they're also getting something back through working with the animals. "I went through a personal situation where I was kind of down, and I wanted my weekends to be filled," says Carlton. "It was so rewarding and felt so wonderful, and it gave me so much. When you look in the mirror, you feel good about what you're doing. I also met great people."

For many volunteers, once you're brought into the fold, you're in for life. It's not just engaging people here and there; it's truly building a community of like-minded animal lovers who believe in a better future for homeless pets and develop friendships and connections with each other along the way. "You go back to events and you see people that you've known for years and years through PAWS. People continue to stay involved, and want to keep doing things."

Lindsay Carlton at the PAWS Chicago Beach Party



THE NEXT GENERATION



"When we first learned about the killing, I often thought about future generations looking at us in disgust and asking, 'You mean we used to kill homeless pets?'" Fasseas said. "That has been a goal of ours—to put the killing so far in the rearview mirror that people can't believe it's what used to be done."

"What mom gets to spend time with their high school child every week?" Paula says of the early days. "We had the passion, and we would work together on everything. It's been so wonderful."

Today, PAWS Chicago volunteers are bringing their children into the organization. "My daughter volunteers at PAWS two times a week," says Le Mignot. "She loves cats, so she goes to the cat room and plays and socializes with kittens and cats and cleans out the room."

"My daughter is 9 years old, and I've brought her down to the Adoption Center and she can't wait to get involved," says Carlton.

They're also inspired by the new volunteers that step into PAWS Chicago, ready to roll up their sleeves and create a better world for homeless pets. "You have people who are still there from the beginning and it's wonderful, but it's so nice to see all the young, passionate people who come in to volunteer and spread the word," Carlton says.



THE MEDICAL CENTER

In 2021, PAWS cut the ribbon on a brand-new, state-of-the-art Medical Center. The Medical Center is the essential next step in the PAWS No Kill mission. As Chicago gets closer to achieving a No Kill community, the work becomes more challenging. The dogs and cats that need help are ill, have more serious injuries, and many struggle with fear and lack of socialization. The PAWS Chicago Medical Center is one of the few places in the country that can treat these animals who would not otherwise have gotten a second chance.

The 30,000-square-foot, renovated facility — located in Little Village, and taking over the entire former bank building — features nearly 100 isolation rooms, can house more than 200 animals, and employs nine veterinarians, 29 vet techs, and dozens more animal care specialists. Drive by on any given day, and you'll likely see a line of people outside the building, ready to get their pets free and low-cost vaccines or surgery from a team of compassionate vets. The Medical Center is also built for more complex surgeries of shelter animals, so every homeless pet gets a chance to live.

ENSURING LASTING IMPACT AND THE DREAM OF NO KILL

Building solutions that last is inherent in the PAWS Chicago mission — after all, it was founded by business-minded entrepreneurs. But homeless and at-risk cats and dogs will always require programs and services. “No Kill is not passing a threshold, and now we can stop. It’s on-going.

That’s why we began calling it an equilibrium. Reaching the No Kill Equilibrium is our dream, but our work is not complete once we reach that goal,” Paula says. “Not only must every healthy and treatable pet in our community survive—our mission is that they thrive. PAWS’s spay/neuter and prevention programs, homeless pet hospital, and adoption programs are ongoing essential parts of meeting that mission. Our programs and services must always be there for animals in need.”

To reach that No Kill Equilibrium, more spay/neuter services are required. PAWS has already expanded its spay/neuter services this year, but envisions further expanding its Lurie Spay/Neuter Clinic operations to seven-days-a-week, with a focus on the animals who are continuing to flood shelters and overpopulate the streets. “Cats and large dogs are our populations of focus for spay/neuter, as those are the pets that are dying in Chicago shelters and on the streets.”

Not only is there more work required to reach that dream of a No Kill Equilibrium; without vigilance at maintaining current spay/neuter and adoption programs each and every day, Chicago could easily regress to killing thousands of animals again. “PAWS Chicago initiatives need to continue at the same pace and with the same passion forever, or we could be right back where we started,” says Paula. “Other communities have seen great progress erased.”

“Las Vegas is a great case study,” Alexis says. “Back when we began PAWS, it had one of the best high-volume spay/neuter clinics and was on the front page of *USA Today* for being on track to becoming one of the first No Kill cities. What they did was amazing. But then, the woman who

founded the clinic moved and the shelter stopped high-volume spay/neuter and it went right back to where they started, as one of the highest kill cities. High-volume, free and low-cost spay/neuter has to be ongoing and prevalent into perpetuity. Sustainability is so important, because everything we’ve worked 25 years to accomplish can go away in a few years if our Clinic does not continue its work.”

THE NEXT 25

Twenty-five years in, PAWS has become a Chicago institution and a national model. “When you look at 25 years of PAWS, and you look at the inception, how we started, and now, there are shelters around the nation who come to us and ask us how do you do what you do because we need to replicate this because we need to save more lives,” Le Mignot says. “What Paula and Alexis have built is exceptional, and it’s a model for the nation.”

But the Fasseases hardly have time to dwell on the success. “We’re always looking at the next problem we need to solve,” Paula says. “If I focus the past and what we’ve done, then I’m not going to create the future. And there’s always something that has to be created and leveraged and priorities must shift with an evolving problem.”

“You don’t even think about the past. You have to keep moving forward,” Alexis says. “There’s a constant supply of animals in need. ‘Rescuers Never Rest’ as a mantra came to us in the heat of the pandemic. It’s true because you think, this one is safe, but what’s next? Of course, you see an animal who is saved and you’re so grateful and happy that the organization and the community and the programs are there to make this happen, but what about the next one at risk?”

As PAWS looks to the future, they’ll continue to spread the No Kill model across the country, implement solutions to unresolved problems, and save more dogs and cats. Further expanding spay/neuter services

remains critical to the mission. There’s still so much work to do, but with help from an army of supporters and passionate pet lovers, PAWS is confident that a No Kill Equilibrium is within reach.



The Innovation

The animals we’re saving today are sicker, more seriously injured or need socialization and enrichment to gain confidence and recover from abuse, neglect or undersocialization.

PAWS Chicago Medical Center, opened in 2021,

allows us to treat animals who wouldn’t have survived before.

2014 Launched PAWS for Life Outreach Spay/Neuter program in Englewood

2017 Opened the Canine Enrichment Center for under-socialized or behaviorally challenged dogs

2017 PAWS Chicago reaches 50,000 adoptions.

2020 Paid apprenticeship program starts, training animal lovers in Englewood to become veterinary assistants

2021 Medical Center grand opening

2022 PAWS sets a new record for number of spay/neuter surgeries in one day — 300 — during our first Spay Day Marathon

2022 PAWS Chicago reaches 75,000 adoptions.

STRONGER TOGETHER

The past 25 years of PAWS Chicago would not have been possible without support from our donors, staff, volunteers, fosters, and the many, many animal enthusiasts who have come through the doors of our Adoption Center to give PAWS pets a loving home.

Here, we look back at some of the people who have made our essential work possible — and helped save thousands of innocent lives.

From groundbreakings to Pride parades, adoption events to ribbon cuttings, PAWS Chicago has been growing programs, expanding services and saving lives since 1997 because of an engaged and animal loving community. It is the foundation on which our No Kill model is built.

Homeless pets—that's what it's been about for 25 years, and through that time, PAWS Chicago has found homes for more than 77,000 of them.

Volunteers, fosters, and donors are the heart of everything PAWS Chicago does. In 25 years, our PAWS Community has donated their time and talent. The result? A 92.5 percent decrease in euthanasia since 1997.

For 25 years, animal lovers of all kinds have shown their love for PAWS Chicago and, more importantly, the homeless animals who deserve a second chance at life.



“I am thunderstruck by the results. PAWS’s efforts have dramatically reduced the number of homeless pets killed in Chicago”

—Judith Blazer, 2012



“I hope more people will consider becoming involved with the No Kill mission ”

—Ann Lurie, 2009



98%
Save Rate
Since 1997

77,000
Adoptions
Since 1997

100,000
Volunteer Hours
in 2022

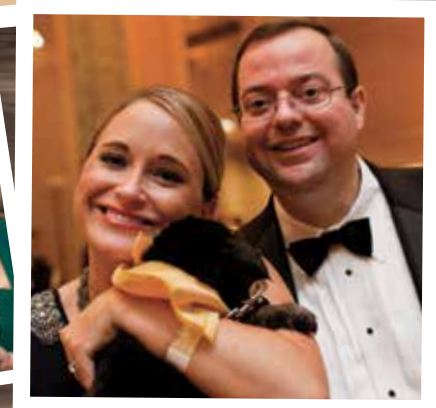
300,000
Spay/Neuter
surgeries since 1997





**“The next time I
adopt a dog, I’m going
to a No Kill shelter!”**

← -Oprah, 2008
She made good on that promise,
adopting Sadie, Sunny, and
Lauren from PAWS Chicago.,



**“I just love PAWS’s
solutions-based approach
and how many lives they
are able to save.”**

← -Torrey DeVitto, actress, 2021

**“PAWS is built around the
ideas that hard work and
volunteers can make
a difference.”**

← —Billy Corgan,
Smashing Pumpkins lead singer, 2018

Planting the Seeds

THE PAWS CHICAGO MISSION HAS INSPIRED OTHERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO TAKE ACTION.

PAWS Chicago's mission starts with a No Kill Chicago, but our ultimate goal is a No Kill nation, where spay/neuter is standard and every homeless pet a loving home. That can only happen if we share best practices and solutions with shelters across the country. Fortunately, through PAWS adopters and volunteers, like-

minded organizations and the media, PAWS Chicago's mission has spread beyond the city and suburbs.

Here are a few beautiful examples of the seeds that PAWS Chicago supporters have spread across the nation, helping prevent pet overpopulation and save lives.



Shelters

The seeds of Unconditional Senior and Special Dogs Adoption Center were first planted at the PAWS Beach Party, when Amy Mack fell in love with and adopted Carlo, a tripod pug. "He showed us everything that dogs are: always positive, looking at opportunity, never comparing. He changed our lives," Amy says. After learning that senior dogs are often left behind in shelters, and disabled dogs have a high chance of being euthanized, the Macks subsequently adopted eight more senior and/or disabled dogs — including several from PAWS Chicago. But they wanted to do more.

In 2023, the former Chicagoans and avid animal lovers (Julian is the CEO of dog food company JustFoodForDogs), will open Unconditional, a specialized rescue. The 8,000-square-foot facility in Laguna Canyon, California, will house 40 dogs and offer medical, grooming, and comfortable, calm living spaces designed to meet the needs of these special pets until they find loving homes. Unconditional is also connected to Rise, a specialty veterinary clinic, where profits help subsidize Unconditional. (It's also where Unconditional dogs receive free care.)



According to the Macks, the project was inspired by their connection to PAWS Chicago. "We wouldn't be doing this if we hadn't been taught by PAWS how to build a world-class organization," Amy says. "We're inspired by the audacity of their program and vision." Julian adds that — also like PAWS — Unconditional is designed to be replicated across the country. "We will make it work locally, then see how we can be stamped and replicated in different parts of the country," he says.

The O Factor

PAWS Chicago's No Kill mission has spread with help from the media. The organization has been featured locally in outlets like ABC-7, NBC-5 and *Chicago Magazine*, and nationally in renowned outlets like *Today* and the *New York Times*.

But there's been no more impactful media moment than when PAWS Chicago appeared on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. In 2009, following a show dedicated to puppy mills, Oprah paid a visit to the Phippen Fasseas Adoption Center. There, she met with Paula, played with puppies, toured the space, and selected a room to donate in honor of her beloved cocker spaniel, Sophie.

"I think PAWS Chicago really opened Oprah's eyes to the beauty of adopting a pet," says Caroline Ziv, who was a producer on the show at the time. "She saw energetic, happy, healthy animals just wanting someone to love them. It was very different from the vision of rescue cats and dogs being castoffs. Over the years, she highlighted the need for spay/neuter, and showcased adoptable pets. The idea was to change minds about what homeless animals looked like."

Oprah asked Paula and the PAWS Chicago team to keep an eye out for any spaniels coming through the shelter, and in 2010, when springer spaniel siblings Sunny and Lauren were rescued by PAWS, Oprah was the first call. She fell in love with them and decided to announce their adoption on her birthday show. Paula Fasseas wheeled in the two precious pups in a stroller to their new owner — the queen of daytime — while Alexis presented a third puppy, Percy, to Oprah's friend Nancy. On a "Where are they Now?" episode in 2015, Oprah reported that Sunny, Lauren, and Percy were all happy, healthy, and thriving in their new loving homes.



Spay/Neuter Clinics

One clinic who followed the PAWS Chicago model of targeted spay/neuter surgeries is MN Snap (Minnesota Spay Neuter Assistance Program). "MN Snap consulted with PAWS early on in the creation of our organization regarding spay/neuter delivery," says Anna Kucera, Executive Director. "We keep pets with the people who love them through no-cost and low-cost spay and neuter surgeries and core vaccinations." Since opening in 2010, they've completed almost 180,000 procedures, preventing an estimated 5 million additional pet births.

To keep their focus on spay/neuter services, MN Snap partners with like-minded community organizations to offer holistic, affordable veterinary care. Partners include Secondhand Hounds rescue, as well as the University of Minnesota College of Veterinary Medicine, which helps provide additional services and surgeries, all with the mission to keep pets in their homes.



BEHIND THE CURTAIN

AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT A DAY
IN THE LIFE AT PAWS CHICAGO
MEDICAL CENTER

The newly expanded Medical Center, opened in November 2021, is the essential next step in our No Kill mission. As we get closer to achieving a No Kill community, our work becomes more challenging. The dogs and cats that need our help are sicker, have more serious injuries and have greater needs for enrichment, socialization and behavior modification. The PAWS Chicago Medical Center allows us to treat these animals who would not otherwise have gotten a second chance.

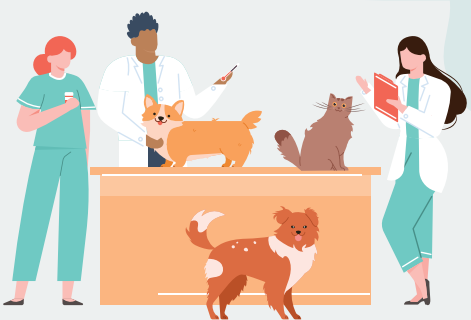
Designed with a medical-grade ventilation system and 90 isolation suites to treat pets with contagious illnesses, a surgical suite for special procedures including tumor removal and advanced dental care, and a dedicated medical team nearly 40 strong, the PAWS Chicago Medical Center is truly the next frontier in addressing pet homelessness and euthanasia.





WELCOME TO PAWS Nearly every week, vans arrive at the Medical Center with homeless pets from Chicago Animal Care & Control and transport partners that don't have medical resources to care for them. The Medical Center addresses next-level needs including contagious (but treatable) diseases that disproportionately affect shelter pet populations, like parvovirus, panleukopenia, and pneumonia. On any given day, the PAWS Chicago Medical Center provides hospitalization to more than 200 pets.

When you visit an NVA hospital, you're supporting PAWS Chicago, the largest No-Kill shelter in the Midwest.



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CHICAGO

- Forest Glen Animal Hospital
- Burnham Park
- Portage Park Animal Hospital
- Old Town Animal Care Center
- Wrigleyville Veterinary Center

NORTHERN SUBURBS

- State Street Animal Clinic
- Randall Road Animal Hospital – Crystal Lake
- Deerfield Animal Care Center
- Bramer Animal Hospital
- Mundelein Animal Hospital
- Animal Hospital of Woodstock

WESTERN SUBURBS

- Foxmoor Veterinary Clinic
- Countryside Veterinary Center
- Animal Care Center of Downers Grove
- Elmhurst Animal Care Center
- Midwest Bird & Exotic Animal Hospital
- Valley Animal Hospital
- Wheaton Animal Hospital
- Glen Ellyn Animal Hospital
- Hanover Park Animal Care Center
- Hinsdale Animal Hospital
- Carriage Animal Hospital
- Naperville Animal Hospital
- Springbrook Animal Care Center
- Randall Road Animal Hospital – North Aurora
- Oswego Animal Hospital
- River Forest Animal Hospital
- Elmwood Grove Animal Hospital
- Lake Street Animal Hospital
- Sandwich Veterinary Hospital
- Randall Road Animal Hospital – South Elgin
- Animal Medical Clinic of Wheaton
- Yorkville Animal Hospital

SOUTHERN SUBURBS

- Mallard Point Veterinary Clinic
- Crest Hill Animal Hospital
- ACC Homer Glen
- Minooka Animal Hospital
- Midwest Animal Hospital
- Animal Care Center of Plainfield
- Care Animal Emergency Services
- Caton Crossing Animal Hospital
- Shorewood Animal Care Center
- Bremen Animal Hospital

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

- Pope Animal Hospital
- Hawthorne Park Animal Care Center
- Northgate Small Animal Hospital
- Stateline Hillcrest Animal Hospital
- Fairview Hospital for Animals
- Northgate Pet Clinic
- Oak Knoll Animal Hospital
- Kruger Animal Hospital
- Peotone Animal Hospital
- Sports Vet Animal Medical Center
- White Oaks West Animal Hospital
- Danville Small Animal Clinic

First exam is **FREE** for all new PAWS CHICAGO adoptees.

NVA is a proud supporter of PAWS Chicago, helping to build a No-Kill Chicago. For more information about NVA clinics and services, visit PAWSChicago.org/vetcarepartners





PREVENTION IS THE SOLUTION

The Lurie Clinic's spay/neuter program will always be the core solution for ending euthanasia, with one clear mission: ensuring people have access to high-quality, affordable spay/neuter services for their pets. This year, PAWS's medical team will perform about 15,000 free or low-cost spay/neuter surgeries, serving neighborhoods with the highest number of stray animal calls. This team is led by Dr. Alycia Eisenstein (left), Director of Spay/Neuter Surgery.



A HOSPITAL FOR HOMELESS PETS Led by full-time Medical Director Dr. Emily Yacker, the medical team of nearly 40 veterinarians, veterinary technicians and assistants provides treatment in a wide variety of specialty areas including infectious diseases, heartworm care, dental surgery, orthopedic surgery, amputation, tumor removal, and ocular procedures.



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YOU'RE MY BEST FRIEND

When a pet comes face-to-face with their forever family at PAWS, it can be a magical moment —and it's just the beginning of the love story. We asked four notable Chicagoans figures to share the moment they knew their PAWS pet was the one, and how that chance meeting changed their lives. In short: They've lived happily ever after.



JIM WILLIAMS, NEWS ANCHOR, CBS-2 CHICAGO

“Well, that’s disappointing,” I said. Tickets for the David Bowie exhibit at the Museum of Contemporary Art were sold out, so my wife, Joyce, and I needed something else to do. “How about stopping by PAWS?” she suggested. “Just for a visit. We’re not adopting a dog.” Five hours later, we had an 8-month-old black Lab mix we named Anchor. How did this sweet dog melt our resolve? Anchor sidled up to the window at PAWS and looked at us. He and Joyce made an instant connection. Anchor is a mama’s boy. He follows Joyce everywhere. He sits under her desk as she works, whimpers when she leaves, and waits by the door until she returns.

A little over a year after we adopted Anchor, I got a call at work. “I just saw Anchor’s sister on the PAWS website,” Joyce said. She wasn’t a biological sibling, but Claire was a smaller version of Anchor. PAWS needed a foster parent. They were upfront about a few things: Claire had severe separation anxiety. She was seeing a behaviorist at the University of Illinois-Chicago, and was on several medications. When we visited Claire at PAWS, she growled at me. Still, Joyce said taking Claire into our home would be a good deed. I agreed. From the moment that dog entered our condo, it was clear she was at home. Fortunately for me, Claire became a daddy’s girl. She was a foster fail; we just couldn’t bring her back.

**LISA DENT
RADIO HOST, WGN RADIO 720**

Finn’s a lovable border collie mix who arrived with a litter of rescues from Oklahoma. While I was adopting him, a second dog caught my attention. This puppy had a crazy sparkle in his eye that grabbed me the minute we made contact. His temporary name was Hades, and he was from the same litter as Finn. Brothers! His new name would be Hank, but I soon realized his given name rang true — he likes to raise hell. If Finn’s a straight-A student, then Hank is a frat boy. Finn follows rules and covers me with kisses; Hank is sneaky, but

he wails a soulful song when I come home. Their brotherly competition for attention is comical. In 2019, while volunteering at the Fur Ball, I met Ava, a sweet kitten with an abnormally short tail, as it had been broken in a few places. She was perfect for our family. “She has a brother that needs a home too!” They pointed out an orange tabby. Bruno has swagger, and everything people say about orange tabbies is true. He thinks he’s a dog! Since then, we’ve added a homeless husky and a farm cat, so we currently have three dogs, three cats, a potbelly pig and a treasure trove of lifelong friends that we’ve met through PAWS Chicago. It’s magical.



TERRANCE NOLAND, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, CHICAGO MAGAZINE



other canines; I would best characterize her aloof demeanor as an air of superiority. She has an ongoing feud with our neighbor, barking like crazy whenever the poor woman walks out of her house.

Nikita is not the friendliest dog. One might even describe her apugnacious. On walks she insists on antagonizing all the bigger dogs by sticking her nose under their fences and barking until they come hurtling at the barrier with a loud whomp, trying to get at our little instigator. At dog parks, she has zero interest in

I say all this to offer context. When I think back to the moment Nikita first met us at PAWS Chicago three years ago, I’m astonished at how welcoming she was —especially given the skepticism with which she treats strangers now. She trotted right up to our youngest son, her tail wagging, and jumped in his lap. We were sold instantly. Since then Nikita has been a loyal member of our family. She’s a source of comfort when my homeschooled son is feeling lonely, a fount of amusement in those moments every evening when she is feeling playful, and a constant amiable presence in our house, whether curling up next to us on the couch or creating tissue forts under our bed. I can’t imagine our household without her now. Just as I’m sure those big dogs in our neighborhood would miss her if she suddenly stopped showing up to provoke them.



**MATTHEW REEVES
PHOTOGRAPHER, SIRREEVES.COM**

Alexandra Boyle and I adopted our first dog from PAWS in 2016. His name was Gloucester — he was part of the Cheese Chihuahua group! — and he came with so much love. Unfortunately, he also had a heart condition. When he suddenly passed away in January 2019, we were absolutely heartbroken... We kept in

touch with PAWS, and as fate would have it, during the Polar Vortex of February 2019, there was a push for fosters at the Medical Center. We volunteered to help. Bitsy had had a leg amputated the day before we picked her up to foster. We brought her home, and 12 hours later — with 12 inches of snow and a minus-38-degree windchill outside — we knew we had to adopt her. Now, we’re on the lookout for another three-legged Chihuahua because a photographer can never have enough tripods — or enough best friends.



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SENIOR YEAR

The benefits of adopting an older pet — and how to help your animal grow old gracefully.



Dr. Emily Yacker

Puppies and kittens may get all the attention, but a senior animals — typically defined as age eight and up — provide their owners with ease and predictability along with a devoted, calm nature. We talked to PAWS Medical Director **Dr. Emily Yacker** about the many reasons to adopt a senior pet, plus her advice on providing for your animal as they grow old.

What are the advantages of adopting a senior pet?

Dr. Emily Yacker: Senior pets often just want a loving home where they can curl up on the couch and snuggle with their humans. Their days of running around the house like crazy and chewing on things they shouldn't are typically behind them. They usually enjoy a few slower paced walks per day, are often well mannered on a leash and usually house- trained. Sounds pretty great doesn't it?

Many of them can still go to dog parks, play with other dogs, run around the block. They still have so much energy, depending on the dog. They still have so much life to live.

What should people know about adopting a senior pet?

Dr. Emily Yacker: Just like humans, as dogs and cats get older, they often experience medical problems. Certain diseases, such as arthritis, dental disease, and kidney disease are more common in older pets. When adopting a senior pet, plan to take him or her to your veterinarian very soon after adoption. All pets at PAWS are thoroughly examined and treated by veterinary team. Often our senior pets are taking some sort of medication (such as a joint supplement), have had a dental procedure while in our care or are being monitored via regular lab work. You'll want to establish a relationship with your vet as soon as possible in order to continue any medications your

pet is taking, to stay on top of any new dental disease, and to continue with regular lab work monitoring if applicable.

Senior pets are often passed over by potential adopters in favor of younger dogs. Understandably, adopters consider the number of years they will likely have their pet. It is true, a senior pet will most likely not live as long as a younger pet. However, a senior pet's remaining years can be fulfilling, joyful years. Adopting an animal always makes a difference. Adopting a senior animal can make a profound difference. In a way, the adopter is forgoing something they want — a pet for many, many years — in order to give a pet that's often overlooked a loving and comfortable final few years. It's a selfless act.

Why does it seem like there are a lot of seniors available for adoption?

Dr. Emily Yacker: There are a couple reasons for this. First, with advancements in veterinary medicine we are able to keep our

pets happy and healthy for longer. Thus, pets are living longer in general. Second, older pets can experience more medical issues than younger pets, which can make them more expensive. Not everyone is able to afford veterinary medical care and therefore we commonly see older pets with medical problems relinquished to shelters by their owners.

What advice would you have for people on adopting a senior pet?

Dr. Emily Yacker: Obesity and dental disease are common problems we see in senior pets. Maintaining a lean body condition is essential for senior pets. Many of them have osteoarthritis. We know that being overweight will make arthritis much worse, which can reduce quality of life. Dental disease is especially problematic in senior pets. Unfortunately, many pets never receive dental care in their younger years. For this reason, we see horribly infected and painful mouths in senior pets. Regular dental care is critical. Any dental disease we see at PAWS is addressed prior to adoption. Just like in people, maintenance is necessary. Plan for your senior pet to have a dental cleaning under anesthesia with your veterinary once a year. Regular teeth brushing at home is also extremely important.

What should pet owners be aware of as their animals age?

Dr. Emily Yacker: Watch for subtle changes in your pet's behavior. Subtle changes can be big clues.

Any advice for pet owners on working with /communicating with their vet?

Dr. Emily Yacker: Senior pets should be seen by their veterinarian every six months for a full physical exam. Aging pets should still receive regular dental care as recommended by your veterinarian. A healthy, pain-free mouth is so important and will improve your pet's quality of life.



WELCOME A
SENIOR PET INTO
YOUR LIFE. VISIT:
pawschicago.org/adopt



THE TRUTH ABOUT CATS & DOGS

How the right introduction can ensure a successful relationship between the two pets.

Pop culture would have us believe that dogs and cats are mortal enemies, unable to even share the same space. But that's not exactly the case. Here, the PAWS Director of Training and Canine Behavior **Joan Harris** shares her expert advice for ensuring dogs and cats get off on the right paw — and become friends for life.

Is it just a stereotype that dogs and cats don't get along?

Joan Harris: Dogs and cats can be wonderful friends — it's been proven many times with all breeds. Let's break that they don't get along! It comes down to how they are introduced. If they're introduced as a family member and with some patience, they can be best buds.

How can pet owners make a successful introduction?

JH: First, you need to know the temperaments of the dog and cat you're introducing. Before you bring them together, you need to separate them for anywhere from a couple of days to a couple of weeks. You want them to be able to hear and smell each other through doors

and get used to the scent of each other. Plus, it lets the new animal you're bringing in get used to the new environment as well. If you are bringing in a dog, it's a good idea to have a few commands or cues that the dog knows — sit, down, relax on the mat, things like that.

If things are going well — the dog isn't scratching at the door

or showing signs of high arousal — you want to begin face-to-face meetings. You can do those every day with your dog on leash, so the dog can't go into a chase game. You also want to make sure the cat always has access to a dog-free sanctuary; they always need to be able to escape. Set up a barrier or pet doors that only the cat can get through. Have the pets interact face-to-face for a short period each day, gradually increasing the time they're together.

Finally, you can start to allow them loose under supervision, and always separating them when you leave the house until you are 100 percent sure it's OK. It's all about observing behavior at each step and going with caution.

What signs should owners be looking for from their dogs and cats?

JH: If the dog starts to hard stare and track the cat, that's a concern. If the dog's body language is up, hackles are raised, they're barking or growling or baring teeth or lunging — any of those are areas of concern. If you see a cat hissing or swatting, or if they stop using the litter box or eating or wanting to come out to visit — those signal that the cat isn't happy. You have to be patient and go slowly. If I see a dog is staring at a cat because they don't know what it is, I'll use treats or happy body language and voice to break that stare. If I can't, then I worry. Because that means they've kicked into prey mode and are tracking the cat.

Each situation is different. You want to make sure if you have a young dog, they're not playing too rough and learn to relax around the cat. You want

“Dogs and cats can be wonderful friends — it's been proven many times with all breeds. Let's break the notion that they don't get along!



It comes down to how they are introduced. If they're introduced as a family member and with some patience, they can be best buds”.

— Joan Harris



to make sure those bases are covered before you give them any kind of total freedom. With a young dog, especially a high-energy, active dog, you'll want to stay vigilant a bit longer than you would in other situations. If you see that the dog wants to chase, or play rough or snap, that will always require more training.

How can PAWS tell if a dog will be able to coexist with a cat (or vice versa)?

JH: At PAWS, we have dogs and cats that have successfully lived with the other animals. We also do cat testing, where we put up a barrier and have the cat loose on one side with a handler and the dog on a leash on the other side. If we see any of those

trouble marks, we say this dog probably shouldn't live with a cat or vice versa. Sometimes, it just doesn't work out.

We try to give the best possible outcome by testing the dogs to the best of our ability here, so adopters know ahead of time which ones we think would be really easy, dogs that we think would take more work, and dogs that we definitely wouldn't recommend live with another animal.

When dogs and cats are introduced, what are they each thinking?

JH: Both cats and dogs — cats a little bit more than dogs — are territorial animals by nature. When a new animal comes in, they're going to be curious, and they'll have to find its place in the family. They'll think, “There's a new animal! Do I need to be on alert? Am I safe?” If they're used to different animals, you'll probably see curiosity. But if they're not, you'll see more concern and uncertainty. It might take longer before they feel secure and comfortable with the other animal in the house.

What can owners do to ensure the relationship stays successful?

JH: With most animals, once they're bonded, they're bonded. But sometimes people rush it. Take your time and keep them separate when you're not around and can't monitor. That's really important. Beyond that, they'll find their own space and seek each other out. A lot of cats and dogs are best friends. It just takes patience and vigilance to make sure things go well for both animals so they're both happy.

ONE FUR ALL

THE FUR BALL

On November 11, more than 500 guests — along with 100 well-dressed canine companions — joined us to celebrate 21 years of The Fur Ball at the Drake Hotel.

Co-chaired by Nancy Timmers and Jon Harris and emceed by “FOX 32” Sylvia Perez, Jake Hamilton, 103.5 KISS FM Christopher “Fred” Frederick, and Natalie Bomke, the evening included festive decor by Tom Kehoe, next-level live and silent auction items, and live music from the Gold Coast All Stars.

Volunteers showcased adoptable cats and dogs, and the event raised essential funds for critical lifesaving programs for Chicago’s homeless animals.



Natalie Bomke



Co-Chairs Jon Harris and Nancy Timmers



Christopher “Fred” Frederick



Paula Fasseas and Nan Kocourek



Angie DeMars, Bruce Haas & Phillip Emigh



Melissa and Michael Canning



Amy and George Burin



Jake Hamilton and Sylvia Perez



Piper Parker

Co-Emcee Christopher “Fred” Frederick (with adoptable PAWS dog)



MAGNETIC APPEAL

ANIMAL MAGNETISM

On March 11, Animal Magnetism came roaring back after a pandemic-related break with a sold-out event at Morgan Manufacturing.

The evening was emceed by “FOX 32” Jake Hamilton and 103.5 KISS FM’s Fred, and co-chaired by Paige Krueger and Jena Gambaccini. PAWS Chicago presented Animal Welfare Leadership Awards to Esther Barron for expanding community outreach programs, and to foster volunteers Ellie Feldmann, Michele Herdzina, Alison Lindholm, Lisa Printen, Carrie Reznicek, and Jessica Cambry.

A record-breaking \$190,000 was raised to help support homeless and at-risk pets.



Co-Chairs Paige Krueger and Jena Gambaccini (with adoptable PAWS dogs)



HEAVEN SENT

ANGELS WITH TAILS

On June 5, Angels with Tails, the event that launched PAWS Chicago, returned after a pandemic hiatus. Nearly 30 major Gold Coast retailers welcomed homeless animals from PAWS and other organizations into their display windows to help catch the eye of a future owner. This year’s event helped more than 43 animals find a new loving home.



FORE! A GOOD CAUSE

FORE! GOLF OUTING

PAWS Chicago held the second annual FORE PAWS! Golf Outing June 13, at Westmoreland Country Club in Wilmette. Presented by National Veterinary Associates and the Sachs Family Foundation, the sold-out event welcomed more than 150 guests for a day on the links — including on-course entertainment — followed by dinner, raffles, golf contests, photo stations, and a live auction, featuring the chance to attend the 2023 Master’s Tournament. Guests also mingled with adoptable PAWS animals. The outing raised \$400,000 to help PAWS Chicago’s critical mission.



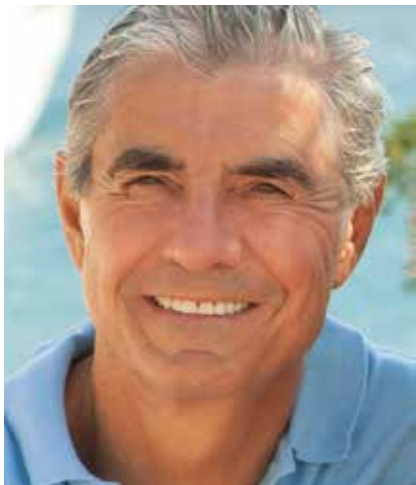
RUNNING FOR GOOD

5K WALK/RUN

PAWS Chicago supporters — along with their favorite four-legged running buddies — came out September 10 for the annual 5K Walk/Run, Chicago’s largest dog-friendly charity event. Taking place at Montrose Harbor, the outdoor event included a lakefront run/walk route, a pet agility course, a Doggy Oasis with puppy pools, and food and drinks. The event raised nearly \$350,000 to help the PAWS Chicago mission, including approximately \$7,281 raised by Elly Greenspahn.

Memorials & Tributes

IN MEMORY OF **PETER FASSEAS** by Alexis Fasseas



Peter A. Fasseas passed away February 24. He was an entrepreneur, a community banker, a lover of the stock market, an American history aficionado, a Cubs and Bears fan, and, above all else, a family man. And, as his daughter, I can say that he was also the most unexpected of saviors for the homeless pets of Chicago and beyond. All who were blessed to love him know that my dad wasn't a cat man. He also wasn't a dog lover. In fact, if it was up to him, his home would have been free from

barks, meows, and pet hair. But the love he had for us—his family—meant that he accepted the growth of our pack to its peak occupancy of five cats and three dogs—not to mention the endless parade of foster animals that filled our home. That isn't to say it was easy bringing pets into our family. Each one required a massive advocacy and public relations campaign to convince him...sometimes it took months. And sometimes we had to sneak them in! Which wasn't as hard as you'd think because he often couldn't tell them apart. But the truth is, beyond the bluster, he couldn't say no to us. And he was by our side every step of the first 25 years of PAWS. He dedicated countless hours to the organization's founding and growth, from drafting our first bylaws to serving on the Board of Directors and Investment Committee from inception. He cared deeply about our work, about the impact on so many lives and about our sustainability into the future. When I arrived home from our first of three Hurricane Katrina rescue missions, after a grueling two days of driving, behavior and medical screening in the blaring sun, and driving everyone back to

sweet home Chicago, my dad pulled me aside. He looked very serious and he said, "Alexis, keep going back! What you are doing is so important!" He saw the animals that we saved, the community responding to our efforts with lines down the block, each person wanting to volunteer, adopt or help in any way he or she could. I promised we wouldn't slow down. My mom recently tearfully reflected that she always expected that one day he would say "Enough!" She expected that one day, the endless sacrifices that he made would be too much—whether it be the late-night rescue calls, like when a group of goats was saved by Chicago Police from animal sacrifice and my mom had only a few hours to find transportation for them to our family farm to avoid euthanasia. Or when we missed dinners, or couldn't travel, because of PAWS meetings or events. But that day never came. He loved my mom. He loved her passion. He loved the transformation that PAWS was making. He loved meeting so many of his best friends through PAWS. He loved being part of an incredible movement.



IN MEMORY OF **NATHAN KARLIN**

Nathan Karlin was a loving husband, father, grandfather, uncle, brother, and friend who lived life to its fullest. He always had a smile on his face and a kind word to say. He also had a love for dogs. His family fondly remembers a time when he unexpectedly brought home a lost dog that he claimed to have found wandering along a busy street one evening. Fearing for the dog's safety, he said he had no choice but to open his car door so the dog could jump in. To the surprise of his family, Nate came home that evening hoping that they would agree to keep the dog. What he didn't notice at the time was that the dog was wearing identification tags. Although he was sad to part with his newfound friend, he was glad to know the dog was going back to a caring family.



IN MEMORY OF **TIMOTHY HORN**

Timothy Horn was a PAWS Chicago Lifeline Monthly Donor for 13 consecutive years. He loved animals, as anyone who knew how much he cared for his PAWS alum Penny will attest. He was committed to animal welfare. He always traveled with dog treats in his pockets, and friends' dogs all knew to expect a treat from Tim. Tim and Penny had a special bond. The two of them were always together. Her loss this spring was very difficult. Now they can be together again.

IN MEMORY OF **SUSAN BLANKENHEIM**



IN MEMORY OF **OFFICER ELLA FRENCH**



IN MEMORY OF **WILLIAM KLASKIN**



IN MEMORY OF **EVAN METCALF-PUTNAM**



IN MEMORY OF **WILLIAM DALE CORGAN**



IN MEMORY OF **STANLEY FRANKLIN FRIEDLAND**



IN MEMORY OF **LORRAINE KUCKI**



IN MEMORY OF **AINSLEY RILEY**



IN MEMORY OF **VIOLA DENT**



IN MEMORY OF **DR. AMES T. HARRINGTON**



IN MEMORY OF **MARCY O'MALLEY**



IN MEMORY OF **MARGARET RONAN**



IN MEMORY OF
MARCIE WEINTRAUB SAVILLE



IN MEMORY OF
KURT THORSEN



IN MEMORY OF
IONE SFARNAS



IN MEMORY OF
MATTHEW VANMOORLEGHEM



IN MEMORY OF
MARY KAY SHAW



IN MEMORY OF
RAYMOND JOSEPH ZAPATKA



Pet Memorials



IN MEMORY OF
CHIN CHIN CORGAN

A world-class psychic brought our now departed Chin Chin into our world, paired as she was with sister Ling Ling. Together the pair made a wholly inseparable knot; but Chin being the gentler of the two stood out as the one most confused by having to choose between her kin and our warm kith. We shall always miss you.
- Love, The Corgan Family

IN MEMORY OF
PAYTON FASSEAS



IN MEMORY OF **RHETT SANTI**

Our sweet Rhett entered our lives in 2009 when my son and I were “just looking” at the adorable dogs at the “Angels with Tails” event in Winnetka. Past all of the cute puppies was a wiggly two year old Beagle. My son knelt down, Rhett put his paws on my son’s shoulders, licked his face, and it was pure love and devotion ever since! Rhett went through each day with an abundance of joy, spunkiness and enthusiasm that constantly filled our home with happiness.
- Nancy Santi

PET MEMORIALS



IN MEMORY OF **CHLOE SMELCER**

Mom was rescued from a puppy mill and I ended up with PAWS. After a lovely foster home, I went to the PAWS Oak Street Adoption Event and voila, my new Mom appeared. Since I was in front of Barneys with PAWS volunteers, I thereafter called Barneys...“The Mother Ship”. In fact I had my own closet at Mom’s house and even wore a lovely ball gown to the PAWS Fur Ball a few years later. When we bought a vacation home in Palm Springs, I loved to go because there was NO cat there and I got Mom’s full attention and the run of the house. No one complained when I went in any store including the grocery store! What a great life! I know I will be missed but now I don’t have to take 8 pesky pills a day for my cranky heart. PAWS gave me a great life. What a pleasure it was!
Dictated to Wilma Smelcer by Chloe Smelcer

IN MEMORY OF
CONWAY CAPONE



IN MEMORY OF
ABBY CUMMINGS



IN MEMORY OF
PAWLA DEMARS



IN MEMORY OF
TWIGS DEVITTO



IN MEMORY OF
SCOTTIE P FASSEAS



IN MEMORY OF
CHÉ GAILIS



N MEMORY OF
PACHA GAILIS



N MEMORY OF
RYNO GAILIS



IN MEMORY OF
TSUKI GAILIS



IN MEMORY OF
AVA GREENSPHAN



IN MEMORY OF
DWAYNE JACOBS



IN MEMORY OF
CHOMPERS MONOSCALCO



IN MEMORY OF
NANA TENNANT



IN MEMORY OF
STANTON HAWTHORNE



IN MEMORY OF
SWEET SULTAN KILLIAN



IN MEMORY OF
WINSTON STAFMAN



IN MEMORY OF
SHEEBA TOBIN



IN MEMORY OF
MURRAY HENKEL



IN MEMORY OF
LULU MISTOVICH



IN MEMORY OF
LUCY STERLING



MEMORIALS & TRIBUTES

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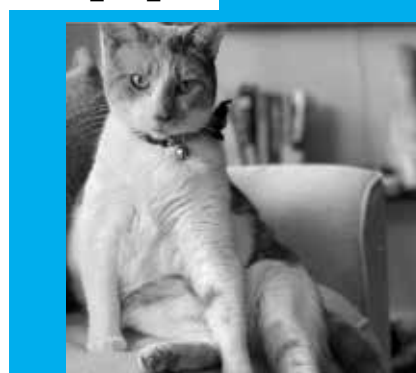
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It's Great
to be Alive!

These PAWS alums on
Instagram are the embodiment
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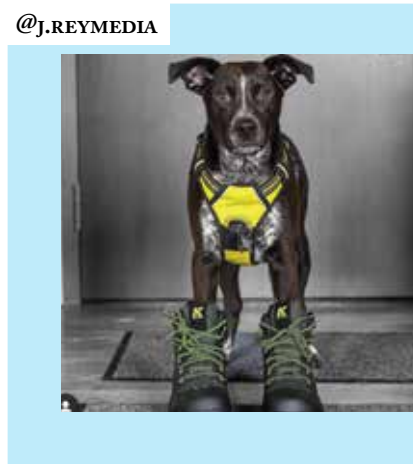
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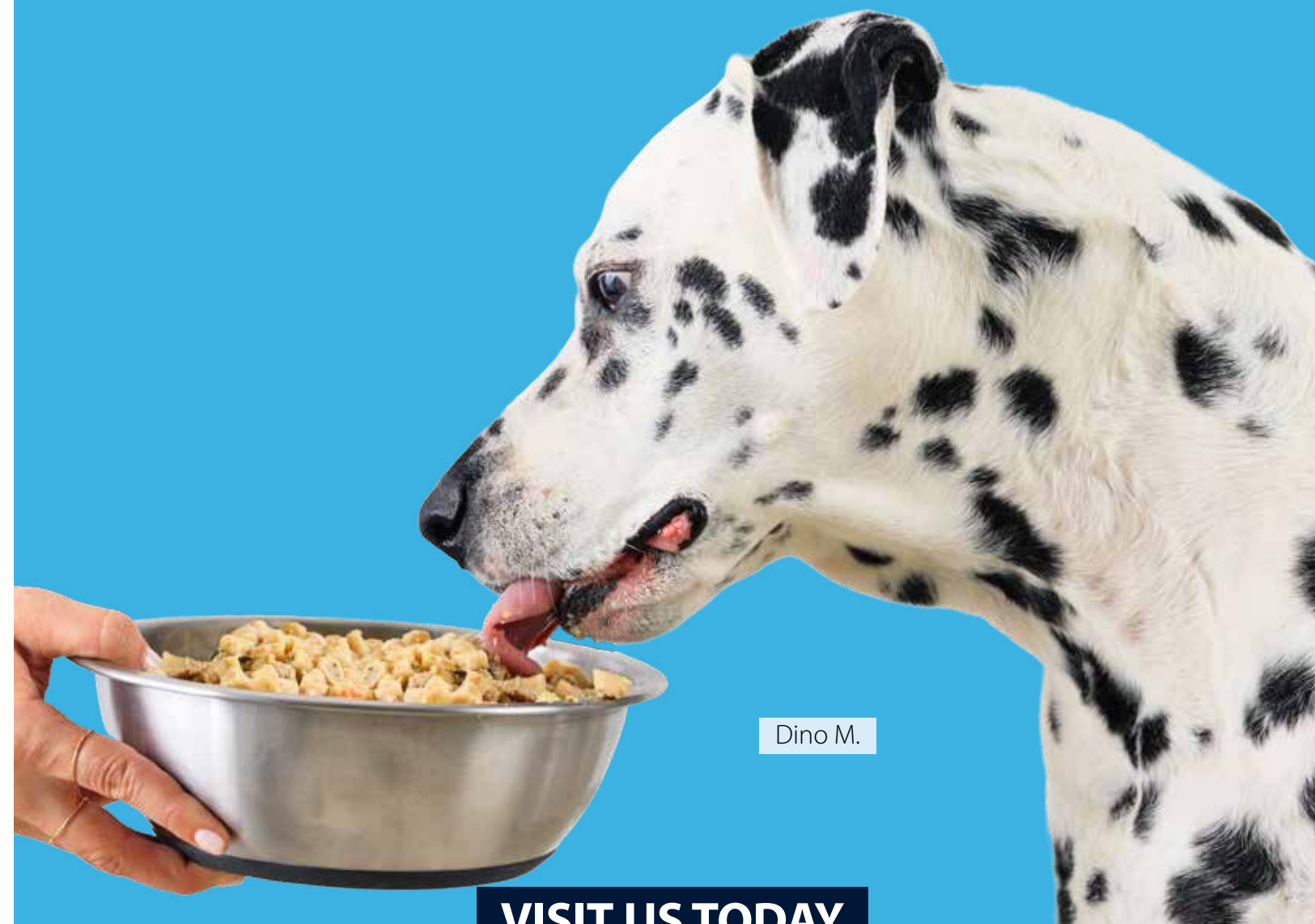


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A man with a beard and mustache is holding a light-colored dog close to his face. He is also holding a smartphone in his other hand. The phone screen displays the word 'of' in large white letters, and the word 'Compassion' in blue letters below it. Below the word 'Compassion' are the Blue Cross and Blue Shield logos, followed by the text 'BlueCross BlueShield of Illinois'.

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