



IMPACT

report **2025**

Built on Trust. Rooted in Care.

IN PHOTO: ETHEL, 113 days in GHS care, adopted May 2025.



FROM OUR *leadership*

At its heart, our work is about building trust through connection. The quiet, powerful bonds that keep animals safe, families together, and communities strong, even in moments of uncertainty.

That belief is what guided us through 2025.

As we moved through the second year of our strategic plan, we focused on strengthening our foundation, deepening our impact, and building stronger connections. Connections between animals and the people who care for and love them, and between the Guelph Humane Society (GHS) and the community that surrounds and supports us.

Thanks to the generosity of **4,739 donors**, **441 volunteers**, and countless other supporters, we cared for more than **3,500 animals** this year. Each one was helped not just by our team, but by a network of people who believe every animal deserves safety, comfort, and a second chance.

But 2025 wasn't only about helping homeless animals in our shelter. It was also about supporting families in moments of uncertainty. Ensuring pets could stay connected to the people who love them. Offering programs that support people through difficult moments and meeting urgent needs with compassion. And focusing on the work that may not be visible to everyone but is deeply felt by those it touches.

We are proud of the progress made this year. Not just in the work itself, but in the confidence others placed in us to do it well. The kind of trust that grows when care is delivered with consistency, empathy, and respect.

Thank you for standing with us.



Lisa Veit, Executive Director



Heather Mair, Board Chair

2025 Board of Directors

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Emma Harris
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Lena Levison
Jim Pietrangelo
Heather Weese

VISION

A compassionate world
where all animals are valued
and respected

MISSION

Advancing the welfare of
animals through care, education,
community engagement &
relationships

VALUES

Compassion, Leadership,
Collaboration,
Integrity & Transparency

WHY I give

Bringing Home Bentley



Story written by Ken and Anne Marie Clarke

We adopted our dog Bentley (previously named Atlas) from the Guelph Humane Society (GHS) on November 29th, 2024. Our previous dog, Mamie, had passed away one month prior, after sharing our home and our lives for 15.5 years. After four weeks of grieving and enduring a very unusually quiet house, it soon became apparent that we had a void to fill.

Bentley has restored happiness and joy to our lives. He is a wonderful addition to our family, and we are most grateful to have him. We are also grateful to GHS for taking care of Bentley until we found him.

Not only did GHS take Bentley in when he was found as a stray and fed and housed him, but they also provided essential medical care. All of those things add up, not to mention the amazing staff, who supported him inside the shelter and even beyond, once he transitioned into our care.

When we were approaching the one-year adoptiversary for Bentley, my husband and I wanted to acknowledge it in a very special way.

We decided to become monthly donors, with our donation coming out each month on the day that we adopted Bentley. This is in order to celebrate Bentley and to pay it forward so that other animals can receive the necessary care they need while they wait for their forever homes. It is also a way of acknowledging and thanking everyone at GHS for everything they do for the animals in their care.

We consider Bentley to be a gift; the love he has shown us and the companionship he has provided are invaluable. Giving a small monthly donation is the least we can do to give back to an organization that has provided us with so much. Thank you, Guelph Humane Society, for looking after Bentley and giving us the opportunity to share our lives with him.

IN PHOTO: Ken and Anne Marie Clarke with Bentley.



YOUR GIFTS at work

In 2025, the average length of stay for a companion animal at GHS was 30 days, with an average cost of \$1,000 per animal. Your support helped more than 1,300 animals on their journey, providing shelter, nourishment, medical care, and the chance to heal along the way.

\$100 Essential Care & Comfort



A \$100 donation helps provide a week of nutritious food and treats, helping animals stay healthy, comforted, and well cared for during their time with us.



\$250 Health & Happiness Boost

A gift of \$250 goes further to support both safety and well-being. This donation can cover microchipping and essential veterinary care, ensuring pets are protected, identifiable, and one step closer to a safe future.

500



Transformative Care & Training

Your generous gift delivers meaningful, life-changing support. With \$500, you help fund behavioural training and enrichment programs, preparing animals for successful adoptions and long-term, loving homes.

"We consider Bentley to be a gift; the love he has shown us and the companionship he has provided are invaluable. Giving a small monthly donation is the least we can do to give back to an organization that has provided us with so much."

-Ken and Anne Marie Clarke



PAWS & 'RUFF'LECT the year in focus

In 2025, **3,537 animals** relied on the Guelph Humane Society for care. Some were lost. Others were injured, surrendered, or found alone. 39% of them were companion animals, 61% were wildlife. All of them needed someone to trust.



901

Happy Tails

**Connections made.
Families formed.**

In 2025, **901 animals** found their forever homes: **619 cats, 148 dogs, 102 small animals, and 32 farm animals.** From rabbits and guinea pigs to parrots, hamsters, ducks, chickens and even a hedgehog, each one got a second chance.

Thank you to the **PetSmart Charities of Canada®** for their gift of **\$60,000** to support our adoptions program this year. This generous gift allowed us to expand our adoption team, helping to expedite the path from shelter to home and offer more same-day cat adoptions.

45,737

days of shelter & care Where care happens every day.

In 2025, GHS provided **45,737 days of shelter and care** for animals in need. On average, approximately **120 homeless animals relied on GHS for shelter, care, food, play and love each day.** Over the year, that equates to **31,341 dog walks*** provided, **54,002 litter boxes cleaned***, and **87,182 meals lovingly prepared*** by our staff, fosters and volunteers.

*Based on an average of three dog walks, two litter box changes and two meals per day.
IN PHOTO: Small Fry, 55 days in GHS care, adopted September 2025.



Where lost can be found.

If you have ever loved a pet, you know the fear of losing them and the relief of getting them back. In 2025, **68% of stray dogs** were reunited with their families, up 2 per cent from 2024. For cats, only **17% made it back home.** Thanks to you, GHS is where their stories begin again. It is a place where lost becomes found, and animals are safe and cared for.



\$ 337,000

in primary & emergency veterinary care

Responding in real time.

In 2025, **primary and emergency veterinary care costs were more than \$337,000.** From preventive treatments to urgent procedures, every animal received the medical support they needed to heal, stay comfortable, and have a chance at a better future.

Farm animals find safety too.

In 2025, GHS cared for **44 farm animals** including chickens, ducks, and roosters. Farm animals stayed in our care for **18.4 days on average**, each one arriving with a need for safety, shelter, and support.

Thanks to our donors and the Grand River Agricultural Society, these animals received individualized care, medical attention, and time outdoors in a dedicated space designed for their well-being.

Your continued support helped provide the essentials. Every farm animal at GHS is met with comfort, compassion, and the chance to begin again.

IN PHOTO: CHANDLER WING, 28 days in GHS care, adopted December 2025.



Services that start with listening.

Every question, concern, or call for help starts the same way: with someone listening. Whether it comes through a phone call, an email or a social media comment, our team meets each person with empathy, clarity, and care.

29M

social media impressions

GHS' social media posts had more than **29 million impressions**, garnering more than **552,000 reactions** and **115,000 shares**.

259,000

website visitors

Our website welcomed **259,000 visitors**, a 15 percent increase from 2024. The top visited pages included adoption, volunteering, careers, and donating, showing that people are not just interested; they want to be involved.

95,000

minutes of live support

Our frontline Client Services team responded to **8,051 phone calls** and thousands more emails. From lost pet reports to wildlife questions, each call averaged 10 minutes. And we were there 24-7, providing more than **250 hours of live after-hours call support**. Together, that's **more than 95,000 minutes of listening, guiding, and helping people through uncertain moments**.

2,146

sick, injured or orphaned wildlife received care

Every species matters.

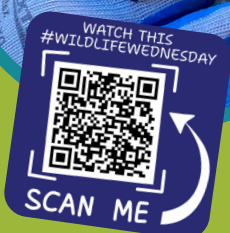
In 2025, GHS provided care for **2,146 sick, injured or orphaned wildlife**, a 15 per cent increase from 2024. More than **61 different species** arrived at GHS, each in need of their own individualized care plan. From tiny bats and chipmunks to turtles and even an egret, our caring community and support from the Eric S. Margolis Foundation helped make a measurable difference for local wildlife.

Each week throughout the spring, summer and early fall the Guelph Humane Society shared a #WildlifeWednesday story that highlighted an animal that benefitted from our wildlife care program.

GHS shared 23 wildlife stories, a total of **46 posts across two platforms**, which were **viewed 265,000 times** by **211,249 people** and inspired more than **9,000 interactions** (likes, shares, comments). Each view and share represents growing empathy and a community more committed to coexisting with our wild neighbours.

One of our most touching stories included the release and reunification of a baby porcupine, called a porcupette (photo, left) with its mother.

If you see a sick, injured or orphaned wildlife, call your humane society. We're here to help.





THE DIFFERENCE *you make*

When animals are lost, hurt, or left behind, what happens next defines everything. In 2025, thanks to the support of **4,739 donors**, their next chapter began with care, comfort and compassion.



Every animal has a story.

Thanks to you, every animal in our care has a story that is shaped by hope, care, and compassion. Whether it is a senior dog needing relief from chronic pain or a young mother overwhelmed by new life, your support ensures each animal receives the individual care they need to heal, trust, and begin again. These are the moments that reflect our shared commitment to a world where all animals are valued, respected, and never left behind.

Murphy

Comfort is care. And for senior pets, it's everything.

At nine years old, Murphy arrived at GHS through our Emergency Boarding Program. His guardian could no longer care for him.

He was playful, affectionate, and surprisingly spry for his age. But after a few weeks, staff noticed subtle changes in Murphy. He flinched when touched. He hesitated with his harness. And though still eager to play, he moved with a slight limp.

Research shows that pain can have a significant impact on animal behaviour.

Tests revealed that Murphy had osteoarthritis; a progressive joint disease that causes chronic pain and limits mobility.

Murphy was given medication designed to manage his pain and restore his comfort. The impact was clear. With his pain controlled, Murphy's energy returned, and so did his trust.

After four months waiting at the shelter, Murphy became part of the Paisley Project, a GHS foster program that supports animals that have a longer stay at GHS and who need more time, routine, or healing before adoption.

Luckily for Murphy, what began as a short-term stay turned into something permanent. His foster parent saw the joy he brought into their home and made it official. In March 2025, Murphy was adopted into the home he was always meant to have.

IN PHOTO: MURPHY (left), 156 days in GHS care, adopted March 2025. JOAN (top right), 33 days in care, adopted April 2025. CLOVER, one of Joan's babies (bottom right), 89 days in care, adopted June 2025.



Joan

Small and scared, but never alone.

Joan arrived at the Guelph Humane Society on a freezing winter day after being found alone in someone's

backyard. Frightened and very pregnant, her tiny body showed signs of exhaustion. A compassionate member of the public, guided by our client services team, safely brought her to GHS.

Shortly after arriving, Joan gave birth to her babies. At just one-year-old herself, she was overwhelmed and unsure how to care for her fragile newborns. She withdrew, unable to cope. That is when our team stepped in.

Joan was given the gentlest kind of help through patient, quiet reassurance and consistent care to help her feel safe and begin to trust.

While Joan received the hope, care and compassion she needed, her babies were fostered by one of our staff members with experience in neonatal kitten care.

Neonatal kittens are some of the most fragile animals that come into our care. Joan's kittens received round-the-clock care, including formula feeding every two to three hours, warming lamps, and constant medical support.

Thanks to your support, Joan was able to have the second chance she deserved while her babies were able to get the care that mom could not provide.

Every life at GHS receives individualized care. From fragile newborns needing warmth and feeding to young mothers like Joan learning to feel safe in the world for the first time.



ALL CREATURES great & small

True animal welfare goes beyond survival. It means every animal feels safe, healthy, and supported both physically and emotionally. At GHS, each second chance begins with the essentials that build confidence, reduce stress, and support lifelong well-being.



Comprehensive care

Safe shelter, nutritious food, veterinary treatment, daily enrichment, and personalized care plans meet the unique needs of every animal.



Attentive, daily care

Our trained experts provide hands-on, consistent support. Through medical and behavioral rounds, every animal's needs are recognized and met with empathy.



Freedom of choice

Housing is thoughtfully designed with welfare in mind. Dogs have indoor-outdoor access to reduce stress. Cats enjoy double-compartment spaces for climbing, hiding, and keeping food and litter separate. Small animals live in quiet enclosures with visual barriers and hiding places, protected from predator scents.



Enrichment time and social time

Daily play, stimulation, and gentle interaction with trained staff and volunteers support mental health, reduce fear, and help animals build trust at their own pace.



Fear-free, trauma-informed support

From low-stress handling to behaviour plans, GHS helps even the most vulnerable animals feel safe again, building the foundation for lasting placements and lifelong bonds.

CARE YOU CAN *count on*

Our volunteers are at the heart of everything we do. In 2025, their dedication, compassion, and generosity of time made a measurable and meaningful impact on our organization, our teams, and most importantly, the animals and community we serve.

We are proud to recognize the volunteers who contributed the highest number of hours in 2025: **Sharon and Ted Klimkosz each contributed 271 hours** and **Brian Redden who contributed 223 hours**—all to help animals in need.

"Volunteering at the GHS has meant so much to me over the past 2 years. Each week, I'm around staff and volunteers who care and know so much about animals. I can feel down by the state of the world, but my spirit is always lifted seeing how much everybody at the GHS deeply cares and getting to be around and learn from the wonderful animals. Being a male who is more gentle and loves being around small animals is uncommon, and I can sometimes doubt myself, but everybody has been so supportive which has helped me to feel more confident in being myself."

-Brian Redden, Small Animal Socializer/Cleaning Volunteer, with Bean (in photo, left).

Brian was recognized and awarded the Volunteer of the Year Award at the 2025 Guelph Chamber of Commerce Awards of Excellence for his positive contributions to the community through his volunteering at GHS.

9,335

hours of service

In 2025, volunteers dedicated **9,335 hours** of their time and talents to improve the lives of vulnerable animals in our community. **Across 19 different roles**, from animal care, adoption support, housekeeping and cleaning to administration, transportation, event roles and our board of directors, our volunteers made a vital difference for animals in need of a little extra love and kindness.

441

dedicated volunteers

441 dedicated volunteers gave their time, skills, and energy throughout 2025. Together, they contributed an average of **778 hours each month**, a **28 per cent increase over last year**. Their commitment made a direct difference in the lives of animals through daily care, enrichment, support, and compassion.

563

wildlife transported



Thanks to our amazing volunteer wildlife drivers, **563 sick, injured or orphaned wildlife were transported** to one of our licensed wildlife rehabilitation partners for on-going care and the hope that they will one day be released back into the wild.

#DYK under the Ministry of Natural Resources, GHS can provide supportive care to sick, injured or orphaned wildlife for up to 24-hours, after which they must be moved to a licensed rehabilitation centre. Our nationally recognized wildlife program is only possible because of the dedication of our volunteers. **THANK YOU!**





COMFORT BEYOND the kennel

Opening doors. Changing lives.

Each year, the Guelph Humane Society relies on foster parents: individuals and families who open their homes to animals waiting for their new families.

Foster care gives animals the stability they need to thrive, especially those who may struggle in a shelter setting. In 2025, **71 community members opened their homes to GHS homeless animals** in need of a little extra comfort and care. Kelly Couperthwaite was one of them.

"I decided to foster with GHS after the sudden and devastating passing of my Newfie, Verona. I was heart-broken and lonely[...] Fostering seemed to be a WIN-WIN situation[...]. Turns out I needed them more than they needed me – they have helped me through some difficult times with so many smiles and cuddles."

For over a year, Kelly provided the stable loving home that Essen needed.

"Essen came to GHS scared, thin, afraid of all city noises with no leash training. I brought her into my house expecting to have her for perhaps a month. She made herself at home immediately. She put on some healthy weight, and I discovered how smart she is. Over the past year Essen has had the opportunity to meet many of my friends and family, building her confidence and teaching her manners. She enjoys all the perks of foster life including having a cozy bed to cuddle in[...] We have celebrated every holiday together, including both our birthdays and Christmas. Essen has proven to love all people. She is a social butterfly and will be your best friend if you give her treats, brush her or take her to a lake to splash. It has been so rewarding seeing all her progress over the past year."

Fostering is one of the most powerful ways to offer comfort, trust, and a second chance. For animals like Essen, it opens the door to healing. For people like Kelly, it creates unexpected joy and connection.

IN PHOTO: ESSEN & KELLY (top), 389 days in GHS care, adopted March 2026.
GUS (right), 242 days in GHS care, adopted September 2025.




A PAWS-ON APPROACH Humane Ed

Big lessons start small.

GHS humane education programs spark empathy, responsibility, and kindness in young learners through games, stories, presentations, and hands-on animal experiences. Each interaction builds confidence, compassion, and the foundation for a more caring future.

1,160

children & youth registered

In 2025, 1,160 children and youth joined us for camps, clubs, school breaks, birthday parties, and more. Across **173 sessions** and more than **630 hours of programming**, young participants built confidence, made connections, and discovered how empathy for animals can shape a kinder world. Children met **82 individual animals** from **7 different companion species** including cats, dogs, turtles, rabbits, ducks, guinea pigs, and snakes. In total, there were **286 animal interactions.**

Thanks to support from the Grand River Agricultural Society, **791 children and youth also explored farm animal welfare through 73 interactive sessions.**

Highlights included hands-on visits to the Donkey Sanctuary of Canada and a behind-the-scenes tour of the University of Guelph Dairy Barn.

"My daughter loved every minute of camp - she came home very excited about all of it!"

MOMENTS THAT moved us

Throughout the year, our community showed up at events, on the trails, and under the lights to turn compassion into action. These moments were more than fundraisers. They were powerful reminders of what we can do together for animals who need safety, care, and a second chance.



One night. Countless second chances.

Guelph's biggest pawty for animals brought compassion and community together under the lights of the midway.

In November 2025, guests gathered for the GHS *Happy Tails Gala: Moonlight Midway*, proudly presented by Go Wylde Real Estate. It was a night of purpose and celebration. Together, **243 attendees and partners raised more than \$110,000 net to support animals in need** of shelter, medical care, and a second chance at life. At its core, the Gala was more than an event. It was a reflection of a community united by compassion and committed to giving every animal the future they deserve.

Thank you to our Gala Sponsors



Thank you to our Walk-a-thon Sponsors



Hope rooted in community.

The 2025 Happy Trails Walk-a-thon, proudly presented by Wellington Laboratories, brought together **284 fundraisers, 100 dogs**, and one shared purpose: **to give animals in need a second chance.** With the dedication of our community, a record-breaking **\$65,352 net** was raised to provide shelter, medical care, and hope for animals across Guelph and Wellington County.



Every pawprint, every step, and every act of generosity helped turn compassion into action.

NEVER FACING hardship alone



Supporting pets and the people who love them through crisis and change.

In 2025, as more individuals faced crisis and loss, the need for emergency support grew. Through GHS Cares, we offered no-cost boarding and peace of mind to pet guardians during some of the most difficult times of their lives.

Every day, we hear the emotion in their voices: fear, sadness, and sometimes grief, followed by relief. Relief in knowing their beloved pet has a safe place to stay while they are able to focus on recovery, rebuilding, or say goodbye to a loved one.

Dakota was one of those pets. When his guardian passed away unexpectedly, there was no one to call for help. Thankfully, Rahul and Rachana Dighe, the couple who had cared for him during previous hardships, stepped forward. They reached out to GHS and patiently waited to adopt him the moment they could.

"The condition that he was found in, was something no animal should have to go through, alone with the owner sadly passed away[...]When we got to know about this, we looked for him at all the possible places."

For Rahul and Rachana, Dakota isn't just a cat. "He hasn't just brightened our lives but also supported us emotionally and helped us through the most difficult phase in our lives[...]He is the piece of the heart puzzle we were missing."

We never know when life will change. But in those moments, GHS Cares is here to protect the bond between people and their pets.

IN PHOTO: DAKOTA, 221 days in GHS care, adopted February 2026.



Making sure no one has to choose between safety and staying together

The GHS Cares Program helps remove barriers by providing vital services that keep animals safe and supported. Programs are designed for individuals and families experiencing crisis or needing medical support, with the goal of reuniting pets with the people who love them.

1,555 days of no-cost boarding

When families face hardship, you help keep them whole.

In 2025, your support gave **112 pets** a safe place to stay during times of crisis, providing **a total of 1,555 days of no-cost boarding** through GHS Cares Programs.

Through *Pets in Transition*, **896 days of care** was provided to **22 animals** while their guardians sought safety from intimate partner violence or accessed treatment for mental health and addiction. The *Emergency Boarding Program* offered **505 days of shelter** to **88 animals** whose families were navigating unexpected challenges such as hospitalization, fire, or loss. Senior Support ensured that hospitalized seniors did not have to say goodbye to their pet, providing **154 days of care** until they could be reunited.

These programs help keep families connected, even in their most difficult moments.

17,454 lbs of pet food

In 2025, GHS distributed **17,454 lbs. of pet food** to individuals and families experiencing food insecurity, helping ensure every member of the family, including pets, could be cared for. We also provided low-cost wellness services to help keep pets safe and at home. This included nail trims for **174 cats and small animals**, and **96 microchip appointments** to support safe reunions if pets ever become lost.

TURN YOUR PASSION INTO imPAWct

Every act of kindness, no matter how small, has the power to create a better future for animals. From lemonade stands to birthday fundraisers, our community showed that turning passion into action truly makes a difference.

Big hearts. Creative ideas. Real change.

You can make a difference in so many ways for animals in need! Your DIY event, whether it's a bake sale, a lemonade stand, a workplace challenge, or a donation drive, every fundraiser—no matter what the size—creates a huge impact for vulnerable animals in our community.

Last year, **62 passionate supporters** came together to **raise more than \$36,000** for the Guelph Humane Society throughout the year. Their creativity provided food, medical care, and lifesaving support to pets waiting for their forever homes.

Hosting a DIY fundraiser is fun, flexible, and meaningful. Every dollar you raise helps feed, heal, and care for vulnerable animals and gives them the chance to find the loving home they deserve.

You don't need to be an expert, you just need a desire to make a difference.

Together, even the smallest efforts can create life-changing outcomes for animals in our community. Start your impact today!



Scan the QR code to access our **DIY Fundraising Toolkit**, full of tips, ideas, and resources to guide you every step of the way.



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Scan the QR code to learn how you can get involved and give hope, care and compassion to our community's most vulnerable animals.