

Humanely Speaking

Bangor Humane Society Winter 2023 Newsletter

Annual Report Edition



Meet Lolita - Age 11

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Soul Friends Furtography

Tim and Darla: A Special Bond

Volunteer Tim Gallon sat down with Kathryn, our Director of Development and Communications, to tell us a little about his experience volunteering with BHS. Tim, who started volunteering in April 2023, has become a wonderful addition to the BHS family, and in particular has formed a bond with Darla, one of our long-stay dogs. He has some great insights based on his own personal experiences, and wonderful advice for adding someone a little “quirky” to your own family.

What made you decide you wanted to come volunteer here at Bangor Humane Society?

The first time I came to BHS, I was 19 or 20 and ended up adopting a Siberian Husky named Nanook. After Nanook, we adopted two Akita mixes as puppies from BHS, Louie and Ziggy. Ziggy was the last to pass and it was devastating. After a few years, we wanted a puppy and had fallen in love with Akitas. They are notoriously difficult but very loyal and loving with their families. In 2019, we brought home Kenji, an Akita puppy who is now 4 years old and a 100lb fluffy, black dog with white paws.

Kenji was a difficult young dog and we put a lot of time in training and socializing him. Learning about training opened up a whole interesting world. I like to learn and I love dogs. For the past 4 years I've built a library of books and watched and listened to everything I can find about dog training. Volunteering has given me a way to see the shelter in operation and interact with lots of different dogs. I love it when they open up to you.

“Tim is a truly inspiring volunteer. He goes above and beyond, showing love and compassion to the animals he interacts with every day. He shows up early to get our long-term residents out and spend extra time with them. He has shown dedication to our dogs here and is a wonderful person to know and work with. Every time he comes in, the staff yells, “Tim, you're here!” He has made a huge impact on both the people and the animals in his time volunteering with BHS.”

Chelsea

Volunteer and Community Outreach Director

Is there a special animal from your past that continues to inspire you?

A dog that has given me inspiration is kind of a sad story. An Akita named Yoshi we brought home as a foster. Yoshi was returned to a breeder at 6 months old for biting. He was an adolescent fluff ball who tried to follow us out the door when we went for a visit. Even with his history of biting, we wanted to give him a chance and thought we could help, but as he matured, he became quite aggressive. We spent over a year working so hard with him and had such high hopes. Unfortunately, some things just can't be changed. With the help of our veterinarian and the breeder we decided behavioral euthanasia was the only safe option. It broke our hearts. I wanted to find a way to honor his memory and help other dogs. A few weeks later I was at BHS volunteering.



Tell us about your bond with Darla, one of our long-stay dogs with a history of reactive behavior.

Darla is a proud, willful, and athletic dog. She needs respect, and space to be herself. At first, she wouldn't even walk the trail with me. We would literally go out one door, around the building, and right back in. Then, one day I walked out the door and said "what do you want to do?" It was like she said "Finally! Someone listened to me!" and we went across the parking lot and did some exploring... on her terms. She is very smart and loves food rewards. She knows "sit" and loves to catch treats in the air. She won't respond to demanding pulls on the leash. A simple food lure works just fine. Darla is a great dog who should live with active people that can meet her exercise needs.

I escorted Darla at Paws on Parade and we were befriended by a young girl, about 12. She loved Darla and walked the parade with us, begging her mom to adopt her. She gave Darla treats and hugs and kisses. It was very cute and showed that Darla is a safe dog despite her history.

What would you say to someone looking to adopt a long-stay dog like Darla?

I would say they should take their time. The staff is fantastic and the dogs are in good hands. The long-stay dogs are amazing and many of them need time to form a bond and overcome some adversity. If you have patience, you have a friend for life! The staff might not think of themselves as "dog trainers" but they are all expert handlers and know the dogs well, so I would encourage talking to the staff and asking for help even after you adopt-this staff doesn't stop

caring when an animal goes home. I would love to help whoever adopts Darla! I've gotten to know her well- she is very smart and I would use tons of food rewards and positive interactions to help her settle.

Is it hard not being able to take them all home? This is a question our staff hears a lot and I'm curious about your answer!

It was tough at first to see all the dogs in kennels. It is hard not to take them all home. Especially the ones you bond with. They really become like friends. I can't say enough good things about the staff. Knowing that good people are providing for every dog in there helps a lot. It's really motivating to come help.

What would you say to someone thinking about volunteering here?

It's very rewarding. Training for dog walk can be a little overwhelming but it's important to listen and learn. There are skills you need to safely enter kennels. I found it best to set days for myself at first, and decided to come every Tuesday and Thursday. I made it a habit. Alex (staff) always says "see you Thursday!" By the time Thursday rolls around, I know they're hoping to get some help. It's motivating and I'm always happy when I come.



Darla



Thank you to:
Soul Friends Furtography
for Darla's glamour shots

Darla's Interview

How old are you? 7 years

How long have you lived at BHS? 1 year, 3 months. They took me in when I was a stray! It's really nice here, but I'm looking for my furever family.

Do you like cats? Maybe

Do you like other dogs? Maybe

How about kids? I like big kids and adults. I don't think my furever family has little kids.

How would others describe you? My favorite humans would say I am very talkative, I love to roll around on my back, and that I LOVE to RUN!

Is there anything else we should know about you? I am very food motivated, and do better eating without other animals around. I don't really like leash corrections, and my back can sometimes be sensitive to touch.

Flawless Fiona



Fiona originally came to Bangor Humane Society in 2009 after being abandoned. At that time, it was obvious that she was a young cat and we estimated her age at right around a year. She was almost immediately adopted and lived in the same home for more than 13 years, but when new animals were introduced to the home, she began experiencing some stress and started urinating outside of the litter box. In May 2023 and now a senior cat, she was returned to the shelter.

Our intake process for every animal includes a full wellness exam, all applicable vaccinations, flea and tick treatment, deworming if necessary, and testing for many common diseases. Because of her litter box issues, we also checked Fiona for a possible Urinary Tract Infection. The results were positive, which may have been the culprit of her bathroom habits, and she was immediately treated.

We also observed some discoloration in her right eye, and after a trip to an off-site veterinary partner, she was diagnosed with Diffuse Iris Melanosis. In layman's terms, this simply means that pigmented cells have improperly replicated and spread across the iris, causing cloudiness or discoloration and reduced vision. While this particular condition sometimes progresses to a cancerous melanoma, she is currently healthy.

But none of this explains why Fiona has been with us for six long months. As our wonderful volunteer, Emily, put it, "Her **BIG PROBLEM** is that because she's so shy and averse to stress, she spends most of her time hiding in the cubby part of her kennel, and **NOBODY CAN SEE HER**. And if nobody can see her, nobody can ask to meet her. And even if they do, she's the type of pet whose personality is extremely affected by the busy, noisy nature of the shelter environment."

And that, my friends, is why Fiona is still here. She's shy. She's persnickety. She's a little anxious. She's loving, serene, deserving. In a word, she's precious. And the fact is that most cats that end up staying for more than a few weeks have similar personalities. They're reserved and they are looking for a very special person to look past that shy side and see all they have to give.

Fiona will require a vet relationship due to her age, and her eye condition will need to be monitored. But for the right person, it will be a small effort for the enormous return of knowing that she is loved and that her final years were spent in comfort.



Please visit us at <https://www.bangorhumane.org/adoption/pet-listings/cats-and-kittens/> to see Fiona's full profile, or to peruse the many other cats currently available for adoption.

Wonder (an excerpt)

One volunteer's true story of an experience with a dog that touched his heart.

By Chris Mares

"I only had an hour and there were six dogs to take out... so it's pretty quick, and they need to feel safe, and loved. They all have stories..." Richard put his backpack on and got his hiking poles ready to continue the ascent up Pemetic Mt.

"There's this one dog..." Richard began, falling in behind his friend. "Wonder... this old black lab... he's blind and deaf."

"Blind and deaf?" His friend said. "Yes," Richard said, "someone found him by the side of the road, shaking. They brought him in..."

"No one's going to want a blind and deaf dog," his friend said, pulling himself up a steep rock, as they neared the summit. Richard swallowed and felt tears well in his eyes.

"He was so sweet," Richard said, "just standing there in his cage. All these other dogs were jumping and barking, just desperate to get out, and Wonder was just standing there." They were close to the summit now, Richard's hiking poles clattering on the rocks. "Poor Wonder," Richard's friend said.

...

"He was waiting. Not moving. I opened his cage and slipped the leash over his neck and he took a step forward. You have to be really careful and guide him. I let him sniff my hand, then he moved towards my leg and sniffed my pants and I stroked him and told him he was a good boy, but he couldn't hear me. I just stroked him, gently, and led him out." They were on the summit now, Richard's hiking poles clattering on the rocks.

"It's great that you volunteer," Richard's friend said, "it must be tough for those dogs. By themselves. Abandoned..."

"Yes," Richard said, thinking about the other dogs - the tiny chiweenie, and the old Great Dane with an inflatable ring around his neck so he couldn't bite the stitches on his haunch. "They all have their stories," Richard continued. "Then we get outside, and Wonder starts to smell the grass. He's still behind me and I lead him out into the field. And then stops and turns his head towards me, like he's telling me something. One of his eyes is closed and the other is red and blank..."

Please scan the QR code for the rest of the story, and to find out how you can help animals like Wonder!!

We have some good news! Wonder was adopted by his fur-ever family in mid-November and spent Thanksgiving in his new home.



Soul Friends Furtography



Soul Friends Furtography



Lolita is an 11-year old Pit Bull mix that was surrendered to us in May 2023 due to the health of her owner. We honestly thought she'd be adopted quickly; a chonky love bug whose only desire is to sit on a cozy couch and eat snacks, she will make someone a perfect companion. She prefers to be the Queen of the manor, so no other pets for Lola, and she should live in an area that's not situated too closely to dog-heavy foot traffic. But she sure loves people. Do you have room for Lolita in your heart and home?

YOU SURE KNOW HOW TO PAW-TY!

Paws on Parade marked a momentous milestone this year with the 30th birthday of this paw-some event. More than 200 people gathered with their canine owners to celebrate, make new friends, eat yummy snacks, buy dog- or pet-themed gear, and raise money for the dogs, cats, and small animals of the Bangor Humane Society. In all, this year's event raised an astounding \$121,000.00—the most EVER raised for this event, and done during a year when the need is so very great.

A huge thanks to our staff, board, volunteers, vendors, registrants, and sponsors for letting the dogs of BHS be the boss of you for a day. I'd say it was definitely worth it!



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Thank you to Bell's Furry Friends Photography and MelBee Photography for helping us capture these precious moments



MelBee Photography

FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I sit down to write this letter, I can see snow falling from the sky and am reminded that yet another year at Bangor Humane Society is coming to an end. What an incredible year it has been! As President of the Board of Directors I have noticed that my list of thank you's never gets smaller, it grows daily and what an amazing position that is to be in!

This year marked the 30th Anniversary of Paws on Parade. We decided there was no better way to celebrate than to have a birthday party. Committees were formed, plans were made, and with your help, we organized the largest party in the history of Paws on Parade! Records were shattered, and best of all... we even had cake!

Over the last year BHS has worked hard to find more ways to honor our mission of placing animals in forever homes and to continue our dedication to the communities we serve. One of these efforts is our new partnership with The Maine Veterans Project. Our goal with MVP Mutts... and More! is to work together to connect a veteran that might just need a friend and companion and pair him or her with an animal that needs a friend who's not willing to give up. Working together we anticipate Mission: Success!

In a post-covid world, we often overlook the effect the pandemic had on animals and on animal welfare. Our days of peaks and valleys in capacity are a thing of the past, and managing a shelter that is always full has become our norm. Events like Paws on Parade are so important to ease the financial costs of running a full shelter, and partnerships like those with Maine Veterans Project go far to address and remove barriers for people and animals alike. We are very lucky to live in a community that embraces our mission. Not only do you embrace it, you are the first to come forward and offer help, and to that I say thank you from all of us at Bangor Humane Society.

I always like to save the best for last and that is our staff! Our staff build loving, caring relationships with each and every animal that come through our doors, and at the end of the day they also clear the way for all the greatest plans, projects, fundraising events, and gatherings that take place. They make it happen! Without them we could not do any of it. To our Executive Director and her management team, our staff of Animal Care Techs, medical care team, our Adoption Counselors, and volunteers I say, "job well done." Thank you ALL for another awesome year! My real heroes in life work at BHS.

Best Regards,
Russ Maynard
President, Board of Directors

Hours of Operation

Monday-Saturday: 12pm-6pm

Sunday: Closed

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2023-2024

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Marin, Olivia, Mallory



THANK YOU!

Our Golden Paw Donors are those that have given \$1,000 or more to the Bangor Humane Society during FY22 (May 1, 2022 - April 30, 2023). These generous individuals, families, foundations, and businesses keep the work of saving animal lives moving forward in significant ways. We wish to thank the following donors for their extraordinary generosity.

Golden Paw Donors

Hannah and William Allen
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 Earl Black and Anna Perna
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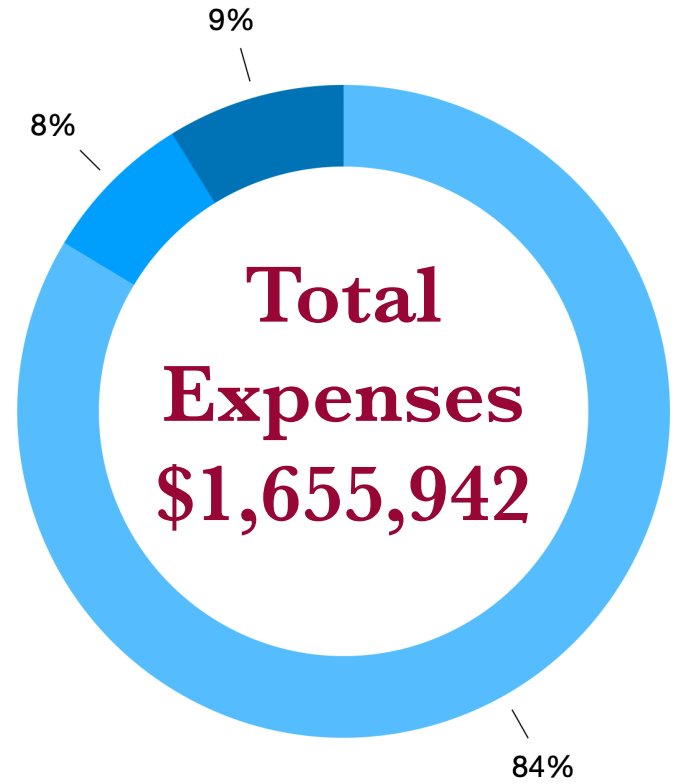
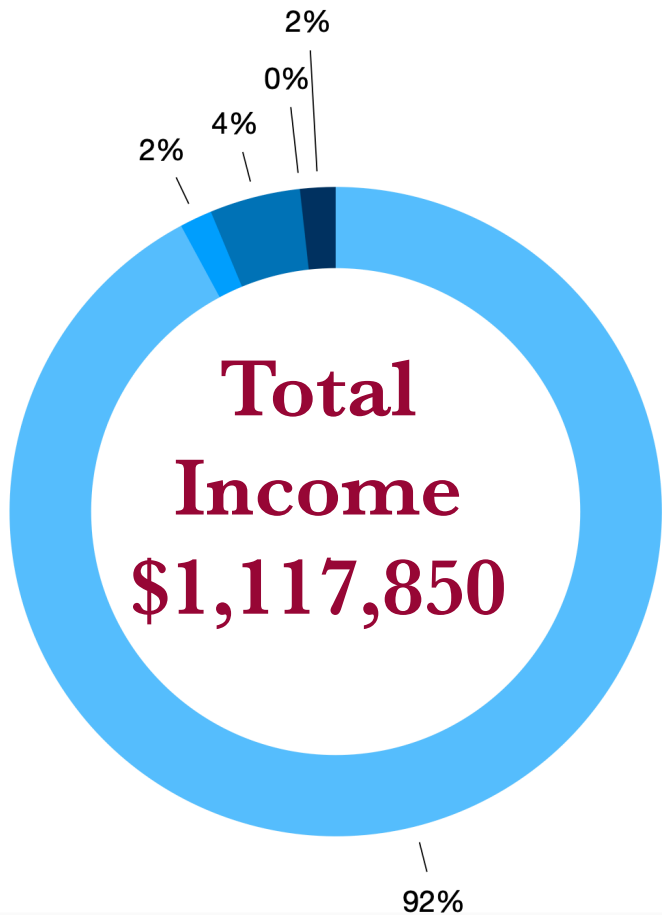
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ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year May 1, 2022 - April 30, 2023



- Unrestricted Contributions - \$1029,939
- Restricted Contributions - \$18,000
- Paws on Parade-Net of Expenses - \$50,219
- In-Kind Donations - \$210
- Net Income for Investments - \$19,482

- Programs - \$1,385,060
- Fundraising - \$125,085
- Administration - \$145,797

Active
Volunteers

125

Volunteer Service
Value

\$122,581

Active
Foster
Families

70

Volunteer
Hours

4,243

Our Commitment to Community

The last year has found our shelter at capacity more often than not. The number of cat intakes keep climbing and we have more long-stay dogs sitting in our shelter right now than in the last 3 years combined. The wait lists to admit pets to our shelter are long, and uncertainty around when space might be available is making a hard decision to part with a beloved pet even harder. We have seen the demand rise for assistance with feeding pets, and we know that the cost of vet care, even for common sterilization procedures, is rising. We understand the challenges being faced by pet owners and are constantly seeking ways to support the communities we so proudly serve.

Our mission remains the humane treatment and adoption of companion animals, and we also recognize the value of keeping pets with their existing owners if at all possible. As part of our commitment to the animals and people of our community, we have more than doubled our low-income spay/neuter voucher distribution. We have begun a partnership with Maine Woods Mobile Vet to offer a low-cost cat spay/neuter clinic right here at the shelter twice a month. Our low-cost Spay-Your-Mama program continues to provide temporary shelter for pregnant or nursing mama cats and dogs until they can wean their babies and be sterilized before being returned to their owners. And we continue to provide food and other pet supplies to those in our region who express a need.

Shelter Statistics

1,309 Spay/Neuter surgeries on-site

5,445 Vaccinations given (includes rabies, bordetella, and distemper)

372 Animals served through **Spay-Your-Mama** program

600+ individual visitors to our **Free Pet Food Pantry**

70 cats per month admitted to low-cost spay/neuter clinic

\$39,900 Redeemed value of spay/neuter vouchers for low-income individuals and families

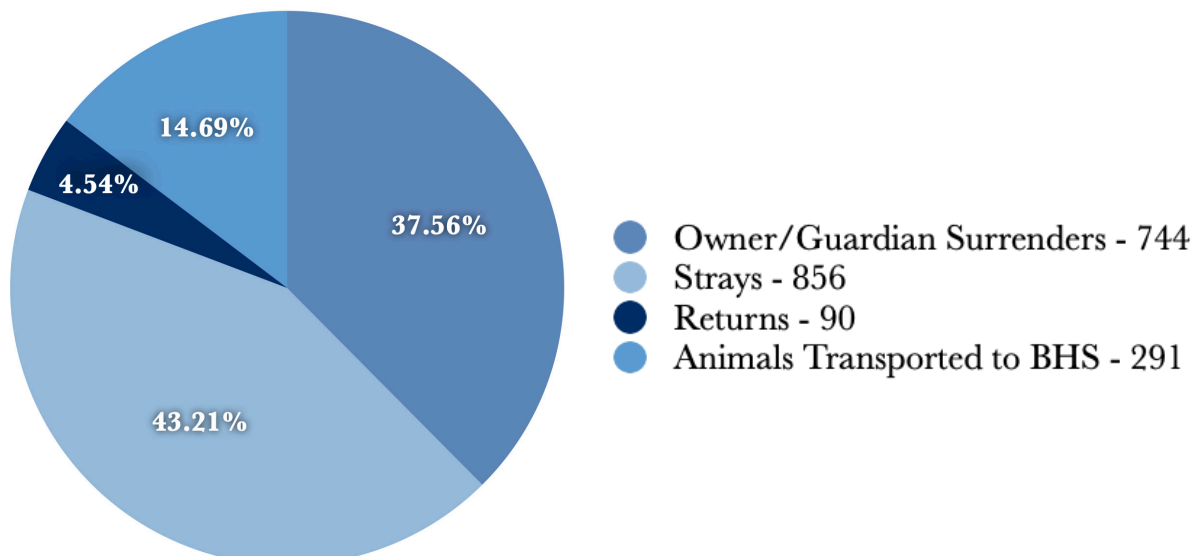
\$174,019.32 In-house medical care (vaccinations, spay/neuter, labwork, treatments)

\$103,174.83 Extraordinary Medical Care (orthopedic, oral surgery, medical emergencies)

98% "Live Release Rate"

*the rate at which our animals are reclaimed by owners or adopted out to new owners

How do animals arrive here at our shelter?



FROM THE DIRECTOR

For this issue, I decided that the best voices are those of our volunteers. Volunteers are a vital component of the work of BHS and we are proud to fill these pages with examples of their good works. A thank you to everyone who helps our pets all year long by supporting our mission through volunteerism, donations, and adoptions.

From all of us to all of you, we wish you the very best for 2024!



Suzan Prendergast
Executive Director



Our Mission

The Bangor Humane Society champions the humane treatment and adoption of companion animals, provides quality care for homeless pets, and promotes animal welfare through education and advocacy.

Bangor Humane Society
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Bangor, ME 04401
207.942.8902
www.bangorhumane.org
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BHS is proud to feed our pets
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