

# animal tracks



## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Our President & CEO Janelle Dixon reflects on reducing euthanasia, rejecting labels, and finding common ground with no-kill advocates.

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## Our 2015 Annual Report

AHS celebrates a hard-fought milestone, placing 91% of the animals in our care.



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Two-month-old kitten Waki and her siblings Wookie, Wobble, and Wishes lived with an AHS foster volunteer until they were old enough to be adopted into new loving homes.

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# a message from Janelle Dixon



As I write, leaves are changing color and falling all around outside my office window—a precursor to a coming change of season and a perfect metaphor for this edition of *Animal Tracks*. The articles in this issue reflect a theme of change and the shaping of new things to come.

If you've been a long-time supporter, you know that we never rest on our laurels. We are always pursuing advancements and improvements that will positively impact the lives of the people and animals we serve in our community. And we believe we have a collective responsibility to animals across the country when we work in partnership to deliver services and create programs and models that can benefit others.

We are fortunate at AHS to have the talent and resources to look ahead, prepare, be proactive and innovate. As a result, we can anticipate accelerating changes in the field of animal welfare and evaluate their impact on our work.

Our mission—to engage the hearts, hands and minds of the community to help animals—is as vital today as it's ever been. We will always seek out the communities' collaboration and partnership to achieve the greatest outcomes.

The programs and services we deliver will change over time to respond to the needs of people and animals in our community and beyond. What we do everyday—igniting the human-animal bond—will always remain the same.

The stories we share in *Animals Tracks* are but a small representation of what we do each day to support people and animals and elevate the place that animals hold in our hearts, homes, and lives.

Thank you for taking this journey with us.

Best,

Janelle Dixon, President & CEO



Animal Humane Society is the leading animal welfare organization in the Upper Midwest, dedicated to engaging and serving local and regional communities of people and animals. Our mission is to engage the hearts, hands, and minds of the community to help animals.

Through comprehensive programs and services, Animal Humane Society provides resources that compassionately serve all the stages of an animal's life.

As a private non profit organization, we receive no federal, state or government funding and rely totally on private donations, special events, adoption and program fees, and merchandise sales.

## board of directors

Tom Hoch, *Chair*  
Maureen McDonough, *Vice Chair*  
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## staff leadership

Janelle Dixon  
*President & CEO*  
Eileen Lay  
*Chief Operating & Financial Officer*  
Lisa B. Bonds  
*Chief Advancement Officer*  
Kathy Mock  
*Chief Government Affairs  
and Outreach Officer*

Animal Humane Society is a founding member of Minnesota Partnership for Animal Welfare (MnPAW) and the Minnesota Horse Welfare Coalition.

## Mission

To engage the hearts, hands, and minds of the community to help animals.

## Vision

To compassionately and responsibly create a more humane world for animals.

## Core Values

Be good to animals. Partner with people. Lead responsibly with compassion.



## contact us

763-522-4325

[www.animalhumanesociety.org](http://www.animalhumanesociety.org)

## locations

### Buffalo

4375 Hwy. 55 S.E. • Buffalo, MN 55313  
763-390-3647

### Coon Rapids

1411 Main St. N.W. • Coon Rapids, MN 55448  
763-862-4030

### Golden Valley

845 Meadow Lane N. • Golden Valley, MN 55422  
763-522-4325

### St. Paul

1115 Beulah Lane • St. Paul, MN 55108  
651-645-7387

### Woodbury

9785 Hudson Road • Woodbury, MN 55125  
651-730-6008

### Now Boarding

6002 28th Ave. S. • Minneapolis, MN 55450  
612-454-4850

## hours

### Adoption Centers

Monday through Friday Noon – 8 p.m.  
Saturday and Sunday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

### Incoming Animals

Please call 952-435-7738 to make an appointment to surrender an animal.

Appointments are available:

Monday through Friday 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.  
Saturday and Sunday 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.



Like us on Facebook:

[facebook.com/animalhumanesociety](https://facebook.com/animalhumanesociety)



Follow us on Twitter:

[twitter.com/animal\\_humanemn](https://twitter.com/animal_humanemn)



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[youtube.com/animalhumanesociety](https://youtube.com/animalhumanesociety)



Follow us on Tumblr:

[animalhumanemn.tumblr.com](https://animalhumanemn.tumblr.com)

## our services

### Adoption

Let an animal choose you! Check out the cats, dogs, rabbits, birds, ferrets, guinea pigs and small critters available for adoption at our five locations.

[animalhumanesociety.org/adoption](http://animalhumanesociety.org/adoption)

### Surrender

Companion animals may be surrendered at any of our five open admission locations. We provide a safe refuge for thousands of animals each year and no animal is ever turned away. Appointments required.

952-HELP-PET (952-435-7738)

[animalhumanesociety.org/surrender](http://animalhumanesociety.org/surrender)

### Pet training

Think you can't teach your dog new tricks? Think again! We offer more than 70 classes a week in Coon Rapids, Golden Valley, Woodbury and at Now Boarding.

763-489-2217

[animalhumanesociety.org/training](http://animalhumanesociety.org/training)

### Pet food and supplies

Stock up on all your pet needs – from Purina One® dog and cat food and treats and Tidy Cats® litter, to collars, leashes, toys and grooming supplies. Available for purchase at all five locations.

### Youth programs

We offer fun, educational experiences for kids who love animals, including Unleashed Camps, Scout programs, PetSet Youth Club, birthday parties, preschool story times, and more.

763-489-2220

[animalhumanesociety.org/youth](http://animalhumanesociety.org/youth)

### Low-cost spay/neuter and wellness

AHS partners with Kindest Cut to provide high-quality, low-cost sterilization, dental, and wellness services to pets of people in need through a mobile surgical unit and at Melrose Animal Clinic in Golden Valley.

763-489-7729

[kindestcutmn.com](http://kindestcutmn.com)

### Tours

Tours of our facilities are available by appointment. Maximum group size is determined by location.

763-489-2220

### Pet boarding

We offer peace of mind pet boarding at Animal House at AHS in Golden Valley and at Now Boarding near the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport.

763-489-2222

[animalhumanesociety.org/animalhouse](http://animalhumanesociety.org/animalhouse)

612-454-4850

[nowboardingpets.com](http://nowboardingpets.com)

### Humane investigations

Our humane agents work with law enforcement officers and respond to thousands of reports of animal neglect and cruelty each year.

[animalhumanesociety.org/prevention](http://animalhumanesociety.org/prevention)

### Microchip and nail clinics

Microchip and nail trim clinics are offered monthly at our five locations.

[animalhumanesociety.org/microchip](http://animalhumanesociety.org/microchip)

### Lost and found pets

Post missing or found pets or view stray animals in our care on our online lost and found bulletin board.

[animalhumanesociety.org/lostandfound](http://animalhumanesociety.org/lostandfound)

### Outreach

AHS offers education programs and free or low-cost services that empower low-income pet owners and improve the lives of pets in underserved communities.

651-788-4685

[animalhumanesociety.org/outreach](http://animalhumanesociety.org/outreach)

### Pet help

Our free Pet Helpline at 952-HELP-PET will connect you to caring, compassionate advice and resources for whatever animal issues you may be experiencing.

952-HELP-PET (952-435-7738)

[animalhumanesociety.org/pethelp](http://animalhumanesociety.org/pethelp)

### Pet loss

Humane euthanasia and cremation services are available to the public and a pet loss support group is offered on Monday evenings in Golden Valley.

[animalhumanesociety.org/lossofpet](http://animalhumanesociety.org/lossofpet)

### Ways to help

Explore opportunities for giving back to AHS including volunteering in our shelters, providing foster care, donating, or contributing to our wish list.

[animalhumanesociety.org/get-involved](http://animalhumanesociety.org/get-involved)





## Combating shelter stress with fun

New enrichment activities for dogs and cats at AHS

**B**ubbles for cats? Essential oils for dogs? These are just a few new enrichment tools Animal Humane Society is using to provide animals with mental stimulation and reduce stress during their shelter stay.

Enrichment keeps animals happier and healthier by allowing them to express their natural behavior through interactions with food, toys, and humans. The goal is to provide every dog and cat in our care with some form of extra enrichment every day.

Animal Care staff provide all dogs in the adoption center and holding areas with a daily Kong stuffed with

frozen canned food and kibble, as well as a soft toy to chew. Cats keep their minds active with new food-dispensing toys, paper bags to play with, bubbles blown for visual enrichment, additional cat scratching furniture, and Booda Domes for hiding. Both cats and dogs receive olfactory enrichment through daily essential oil sprayed in their living areas and auditory enrichment through recorded music.

Results of the added enrichment

are already showing. “We have seen fewer animals experiencing issues with shelter stress,” says Behavior Modification and Rehabilitation Specialist Becca Krueger. “This happens when an animal is in the shelter for too long and their behavior starts to change due to a lack of mental stimulation. By providing additional enrichment opportunities for the animals, we are doing more to prevent this from happening.”



## A huge milestone for Adoption Preparation

Celebrating the success of this important program for shy dogs

**T**his year Animal Humane Society's Adoption Preparation (Ad Prep) program helped its 10,000th animal overcome fear and anxiety so it could find a loving home.

Launched in 1992 with just a handful of volunteers, the Ad Prep program has grown exponentially as animal behavior modification has become an increasingly common practice. Now more than 40 volunteers work with our Behavior Modification and Rehabilitation staff, helping around 800 shy and fearful dogs every year.

Each animal in our care receives a thorough behavior assessment to gauge their reaction to activities like handling, feeding, and interaction

with children to identify areas of sensitivity. Most dogs are ready for adoption immediately. But when a dog shows signs of fear, extreme shyness, or is uncomfortable with human handling, Ad Prep works with them to build the skills they need to be a successful pet.

Some dogs are genetically predisposed to being shy or fearful and will remain so their whole lives. Others are under-socialized and lack life experience, so exposing them to new things helps build their confidence. The majority of dogs placed in the Ad Prep program are a little of both – shy by nature and under-socialized.

Staff use counter-conditioning and

desensitization techniques along with positive reinforcement to build the animals' confidence. They gradually expose the dogs to unfamiliar items and situations in small increments, pairing these interactions with high-value food to help form positive associations. "Essentially strangers are scary, but if we feed the dog hot dogs each time he sees a stranger then he starts feeling better about them," says Behavior Modification and Rehabilitation Specialist Kate Erdmann.

Success in the Ad Prep program is only possible with time, repetition, care, and compassion. We are so grateful for all the staff and volunteers who have worked to make 10,000 happy new beginnings possible.



## She makes a difference, one dog at a time

Edie Shumaker has been with the Ad Prep program since the beginning

The Adoption Preparation program couldn't have reached its latest milestone without the volunteers who dedicate their time and patience to helping shy dogs conquer their fears and proceed to the adoption center. One of these extraordinary volunteers is Edie Shumaker.

Edie grew up in an animal-loving family and began volunteering at Animal Humane Society in 1990 when she retired from a career as a Medical Technologist. During her first shift at the 1990 Walk for Animals, she never imagined she would spend the next 25 years preparing dogs for new homes.

Edie was one of the first volunteers to work with shy and fearful dogs when the Ad Prep program began in the early 1990s.

Dr. Robert Anderson of the University of Minnesota, one of the few board certified veterinary behaviorists at the time, taught her techniques to build animals' confidence.

Edie worked hands-on with the dogs at first, moving into a supervisory role as time went on, and is now integral in helping the Behavior Modification and Rehabilitation team train new Ad Prep volunteers and monitor dogs' progress in the program.

After all this time, Edie still proudly remembers her first successful Ad Prep placement, a shy Terrier-mix puppy named Kim who graduated from the program and was adopted into a happy home.



**During her first shift  
she never imagined she  
would spend the next 25  
years preparing dogs for  
new homes.**



## Pet help is just a call away

Expanded Pet Helpline  
connects pet owners with  
advice and resources

Few things bring as much joy as a pet's unconditional love. But owning a pet can be as challenging as it is rewarding. That's why Animal Humane Society expanded the Pet Helpline, a free service that offers caring, compassionate advice and resources to help with any pet problem. Call 952-HELP-PET (952-435-7738) for free assistance with everything from crate training your puppy to finding pet-friendly housing and low-cost veterinary care.

The Pet Helpline—launched in 2011 as the Animal Admissions Center—is also the first stop for anyone considering surrendering a pet. Pet Helpline staff assist people in making informed decisions about their pets and can provide advice and alternatives that ultimately keep animals in their homes.





Sixteen dogs living outdoors in poor conditions were removed from a property in Northern Minnesota and brought to AHS.

## Going the extra mile for animals in distress

Large-scale surrenders and seizures add to the shelter population

When our humane investigations team arrived at a home near Hinckley in June, they found 36 cats living in a dark, filthy, and cramped house. Many of the cats had serious eye issues and wounds from fighting. The house had no power for fans or air conditioning to protect those living inside from the sweltering summer heat.

The felines rescued in this case are among 149 animals in distress that have come to AHS as a result of humane investigations during the first nine months of 2015.

Other cases include the large-scale surrender of 55 cats living without adequate care in a Minneapolis home and the rescue of 16 dogs from poor outdoor conditions with little or no opportunity for socialization on a property in Northern Minnesota.

Our two humane agents respond to hundreds of reports of animal abuse and neglect each year, collaborating with local law enforcement to protect animals. Although many cases can be resolved by educating caretakers and providing resources to help them care for their pets, others result in seizures or large-scale surrenders.



Dozens of cats rescued from filthy conditions in a home near Hinckley arrive at AHS.

In those cases—14 so far this year—an AHS rescue team works with investigators and law enforcement in the field while another team prepares the shelter for an influx of animals.

Keith Streff, an AHS humane agent since 1987, sees the impact of these efforts firsthand. “I observe the behaviors of animals in harmful situations and then get to see them change as they adjust to a better environment,” Streff says. “We provide a unique service that no other animal welfare group in Minnesota can offer and I’m proud to represent an organization that goes above and beyond to help animals in need no matter how small, large, or complex the case.”





## Bringing animal lovers together

The Pack connects young professionals with AHS

A new Animal Humane Society group is giving young professionals who are passionate about animals the opportunity to connect. The Pack, a group for young people between the ages of 20 and 40, offers members a chance to learn about, take part in, and advocate for the work AHS does while sharing ideas and building relationships.

At the September kickoff event this fall, members met for an informational happy hour at AHS's Golden Valley location. Special guest Dr. Graham Brayshaw, director of animal services at AHS, spoke to the group about some of the organization's groundbreaking new initiatives, and participants enjoyed appetizers, drinks, and visits from adoptable furry friends. The Pack's second event in October was held at Elm Creek Park Reserve in Maple Grove. Members gathered for donuts and a morning stroll, ending at the off-leash dog area where those with pets could let their animals play.

Future Pack events will include animal-centered meet-ups and exclusive volunteer opportunities for members both at AHS and in the community. Paid membership will begin in January 2016, but all prior events are free and open to all. To learn more about membership in this new social club visit [animalhumanesociety.org/pack](http://animalhumanesociety.org/pack).



## Putting cats to work

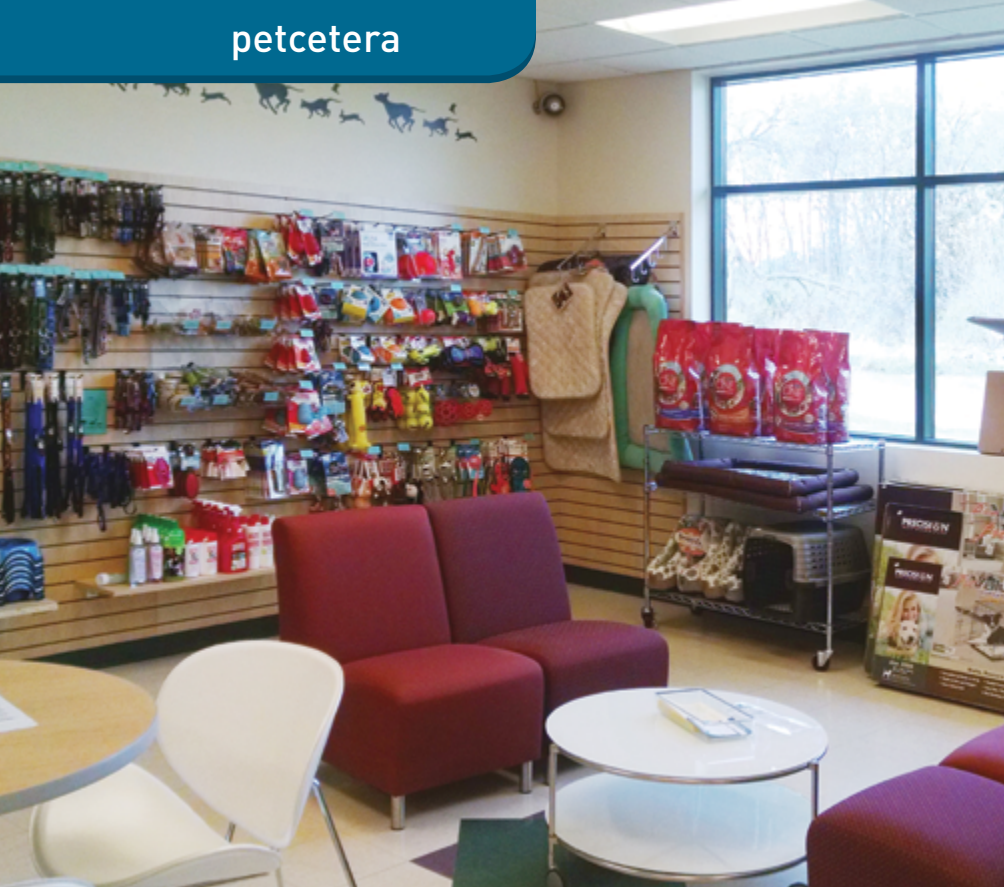
New alternative saves cats not suitable for adoption

A new initiative is providing safe homes and better lives for cats that aren't eligible for traditional adoption at Animal Humane Society.

The Working Cat program places healthy cats that are not candidates for adoption into environments where they can flourish. Cats that use the litter box inconsistently or react negatively to routine handling by people and would not do well as house cats are placed in barns, shops, and businesses looking for inexpensive and effective rodent control.

Working cats receive identical care to the cats in our adoption program, including spay or neuter surgery and vaccinations. They also have their ear tipped to indicate they have been sterilized.

Forty-two cats have been placed through this initiative so far. To acquire a working cat, adopters must agree to provide a warm, safe shelter like a barn or shop to keep the cat protected from the elements, daily food and clean water, medical care as needed, and a way to keep the cat contained for 2-3 weeks to acclimate to its new surroundings. A donation is suggested in lieu of an adoption fee. To inquire about a working cat, visit [animalhumanesociety.org/workingcats](http://animalhumanesociety.org/workingcats).



Bright, open spaces provide a friendly, relaxing environment for animals and adopters alike.

## Adoption center updates and a more personalized experience

Renovations at all five locations help improve the adoption process

Over the past year, Animal Humane Society has made dramatic improvements to the adoption experience at all five locations to better serve both customers and animals.

Our Golden Valley and Coon Rapids adoption centers were remodeled in 2014. This year, we turned our attention to Woodbury, St. Paul, and Buffalo. Adoption centers at these three sites received colorful makeovers, including enhanced housing for adoptable animals, comfortable seating, and new merchandise displays.

Cats in the Woodbury adoption

center are enjoying a redesigned colony room with exciting new furniture, including a large exercise wheel, and six glass cat condos built to showcase adoptable felines.

The Buffalo adoption center now boasts a glass cat colony room, new checkout and retail areas, and comfortable customer seating areas.

In St. Paul, potential adopters can get to know adoptable animals in improved visitation rooms with windowed doors, updated flooring, and new furniture. A generous group of 100 Target volunteers kicked off the St. Paul remodel by painting and installing new furniture and fixtures.



New cat condos at the Woodbury location give customers a better view of adoptable felines.



Seating areas in each site provide comfortable space for staff and volunteers to guide customers through the adoption process.

The renovations are part of a larger effort to shift from a transactional adoption process to one that is friendlier and more relational. Staff and volunteers can now answer customer questions anywhere in the building, thanks to new tablets and headsets that offer instant access to electronic animal records. Instead of standing in long lines at an adoption counter, customers are guided through the adoption process in comfortable seating areas, providing a personalized adoption experience that feels both celebratory and fun.





## A different approach for cats with ringworm

New treatment proves successful in curing the disease

A new treatment protocol at Animal Humane Society is successfully curing felines in our care of ringworm – a disease that is extremely difficult to manage and treat, particularly in a shelter environment.

Ringworm has always been a great concern for animal shelters. The fungus' spores can live for

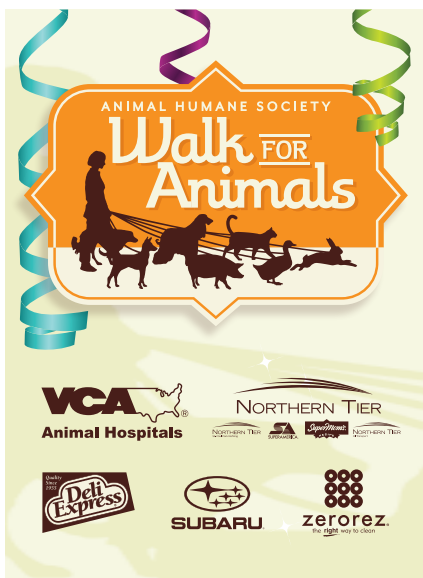
years in the environment and can infect nearly anything with hair. A ringworm infection takes weeks to show up in animals, and treating it can take months, making it dangerous in environments like rescue organizations that are housing hundreds of animals.

AHS has successfully treated ringworm in dogs for several

years, but curing cats proved more challenging. Ringworm is far more contagious in cats than other species because felines can carry and spread the illness while remaining asymptomatic.

This spring, AHS veterinary staff tried a new treatment method prompted by research gathered by volunteer and donor Meg Gisslen and using recommendations from Dr. Sandra Newbury, one of the leading shelter veterinarians in the country. Other shelters had experienced success with this protocol and found that once treatment began, cats were less likely to spread the illness as well.

The treatment takes approximately 4-5 weeks and requires a great deal of time, space, and expensive medications. As of mid-October, 27 felines in AHS's care had been cured of the disease and adopted into loving homes.



# WHAT'S IN A NAME?

By Paul Sorenson

**Animal Humane Society President & CEO Janelle Dixon reflects on reducing euthanasia, rejecting labels, and finding common ground with no-kill advocates.**

## **“Are you no-kill?”**

That’s a question we hear often – and one few people truly understand. The answer isn’t as simple as yes or no.

Over the past seven years Animal Humane Society has strengthened its efforts to reduce euthanasia and help more animals get the medical and behavioral care they need to find loving homes. Through innovative programs and compassionate care, we placed 91 percent of the 23,072 companion animals that came

through our doors last year. By every measure we exceed the criteria of the movement’s leading manifesto, Nathan Winograd’s “No Kill Equation.” Yet we don’t – and won’t – embrace the no-kill language.

For AHS President & CEO Janelle Dixon, it’s a matter of principle.

Despite the noble intentions of its advocates, the no-kill movement has divided the animal welfare community. Some activists have used polarizing tactics in an effort

to promote no-kill as the only way to save animals. One particularly vocal faction gained prominence by demonizing organizations like AHS.

Dixon, who has spent the past 24 years working to improve the lives of animals, is saddened and frustrated by the conflict.

“Although we share many of the same goals and values, the confrontational and often misleading tactics used by some no-kill activists tend to pit us against each other,”







says Dixon. “Instead of focusing on what we have in common and how we can work together, the conversation becomes about who’s doing it right and who’s doing it wrong. When that happens, our work is undermined, and it’s the animals and the community that lose.”

#### The language gap

The language associated with the no-kill movement is especially polarizing, perpetuating the conflict.

What does no-kill mean? Although the term has become mainstream, there’s no universally accepted definition. But one fact is certain: No-kill does not equal no euthanasia.

In general, an organization calling itself no-kill ensures that 90 percent of the animals that leave the shelter do so alive, through adoption or some other form of placement. However, many organizations claiming no-kill status are using less rigorous standards. They may say that they

place 90 percent of *adoptable* animals or 90 percent of *healthy* animals rather than 90 percent of *all* animals.

“Unfortunately, no-kill doesn’t mean what most people think it means,” says Dixon. “It’s like labeling food products ‘natural’ or ‘gourmet.’ Those terms appeal to the public but without any kind of watchdog or standards they are virtually meaningless. You can’t take them at face value.”

No-kill terminology can be



**People who  
work at AHS do so  
because they  
love animals and  
have a connection  
to the mission.**

Animal Humane Society updated adoption centers in all five of its sites, providing warm, inviting spaces with improved housing for animals and a colorful, comfortable environment for visitors. Friendly staff and volunteers ensure that both animals and adopters get the attention and care they deserve.

similarly deceptive. “Despite what people believe, most organizations claiming no-kill status are in fact still euthanizing animals.”

What’s worse, says Dixon, is how no-kill terminology has changed the way people view the rest of the animal welfare world.

“Alarming, any organization that doesn’t claim no-kill status is now labeled a kill shelter. A *kill shelter*. I don’t think people really understand the negative impact that has and how much it demeans and demoralizes people who work in those shelters, people who have dedicated their lives to helping animals.”

No-kill activists contend that the provocative language is warranted. Dixon strongly disagrees.

Labeling shelter workers killers isn’t just inflammatory and offensive, it’s cruel, she argues. “Killing implies malicious intent. There’s no malice involved in what we do.”

“People who work at AHS do so because they love animals and have a connection to the mission. They don’t go to work every day and pick dogs or cats they want to kill. When we make the difficult decision to euthanize an animal it’s about providing the most caring outcome for a cat with advanced cancer or an aggressive dog that can’t





Open admission shelters  
like AHS never turn any  
animal away. We are  
committed to helping people  
and animals regardless of  
circumstance.

be placed in a home. Euthanasia is an act of compassion.”

That’s true throughout the animal welfare community, says Dixon. “Yes, unfortunately, there are still places euthanizing healthy and treatable animals, but they aren’t acting out of malice either.” AHS partners with many such shelters in communities overwhelmed with too many animals and too few adopters. Each year more than 7,000 dogs and cats facing euthanasia in other shelters come to AHS to find homes.

Many people draw conclusions about an organization’s worthiness based on these labels. “People treat it as a litmus test,” says Dixon. But focusing on just one data point – placement rate – distorts the relative impact of organizations in the community and across the country.

“You might have one organization with a 90 percent placement rate that takes in 1,000 animals in a year and another with an 80 percent placement rate that takes in 20,000. The organization that saves 900 animals may be celebrated for its no-kill status while the one that saves 16,000 is disparaged as a kill shelter. But which has a greater positive impact for animals and the community?”

### Philosophical differences

More important than the no-kill label, says Dixon, is an organization’s

admission philosophy.

“Few organizations are truly no-kill. Commitment to the community is really the defining factor. Do you accept every animal in need or limit your intake to avoid euthanasia? When you limit admission you don’t have to make as many hard choices about life and death.”

“Open admission shelters like AHS never turn any animal away. We are committed to helping people and animals regardless of circumstance. We have a responsibility to our community and need to have the capacity to care for the animals entrusted to us. And we also believe that a shelter is a temporary refuge, not a long-term home. We understand the difficult reality that some animals may not or should not be placed in the community.”

Limited admission organizations restrict intake based on available space or criteria like health, breed, or behavior. Often operating at or above maximum capacity, they don’t have room to take in every animal brought to them. “These organizations can only call themselves no-kill because they have chosen to turn animals away. When that happens, open admission agencies like AHS must step in to fill the gap.”

Many organizations that limit admission and label themselves no-kill are avoiding euthanasia at all costs. But



Animal Humane Society partners with more than 150 animal welfare organizations, taking in more than 7,000 animals per year from other shelters and rescues in need of assistance including those in Minnesota, Oklahoma, Georgia, Alabama, Missouri, Indiana and California.



keeping an animal alive no matter what is not always the most humane option.

“It’s not just about living – it’s about thriving. Animals in some no-kill facilities spend months or years wasting away in a cage. The situations they live in are stressful and deplorable. Is that really a compassionate outcome for those animals?”

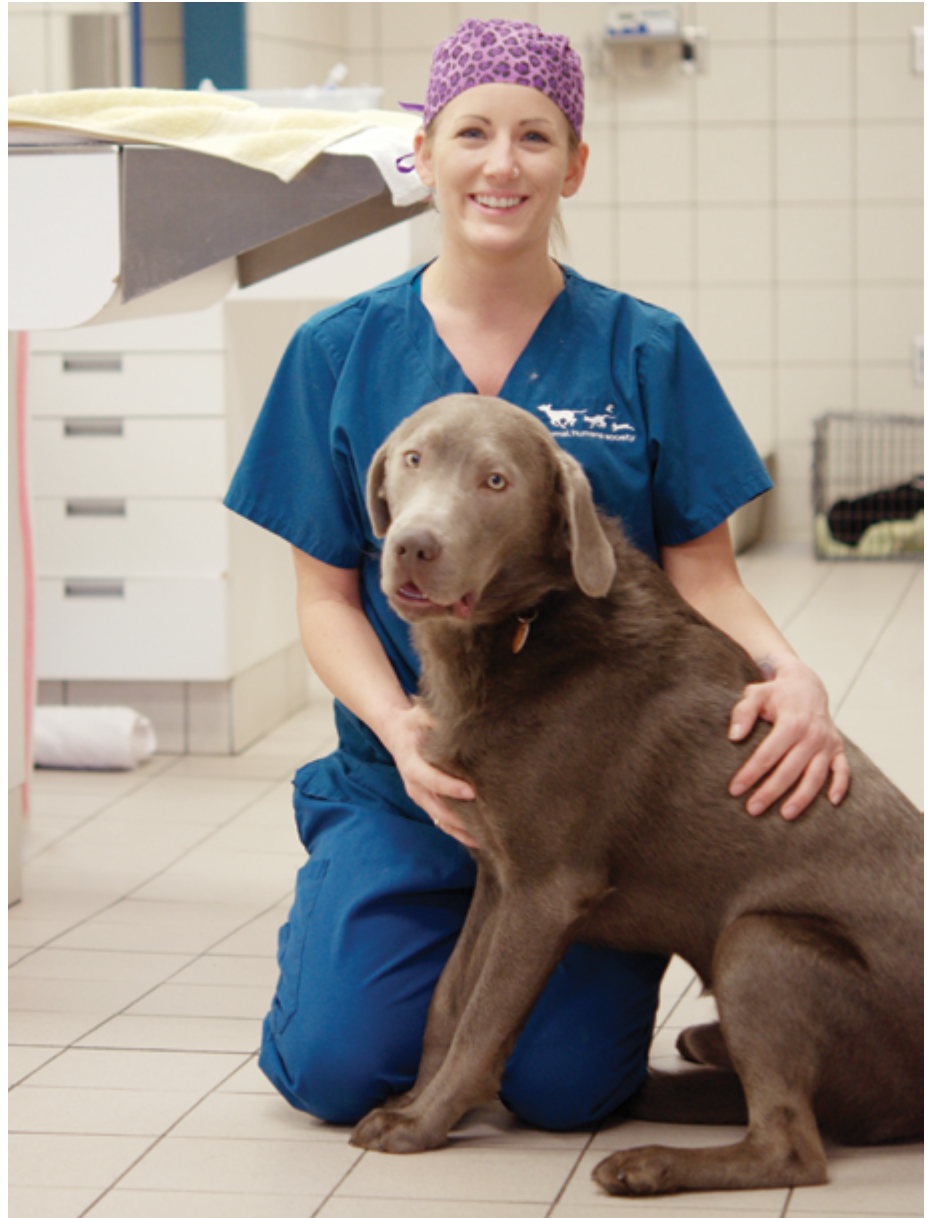
### Finding common ground

Despite these objections, Dixon knows that many no-kill proponents share the same values as AHS. “There’s a collaborative arm of the no-kill movement that works with all kinds of agencies, has good relationships, and does not undermine others. Like us, they are striving to do everything they can to have the greatest positive impact on animals. Their efforts, like ours, are driven by a desire to act responsibly while providing animals with a second chance whenever possible.”

“There’s space in the field of animal welfare for all philosophies,” she adds. “By building relationships, sharing ideas, and supporting each other, we help more and more animals in each of our communities. After all, we’re all working toward a common goal.”

Indeed, many of the tactics embraced by the no-kill movement align with existing AHS priorities. The “No Kill Equation,” for example, outlines programs similar to those championed by AHS: rescue partnerships, volunteers, foster care, trap-neuter-return, pet retention, comprehensive adoption programs, public relations and community involvement, medical and behavioral rehabilitation, high-volume low-cost spay/neuter, proactive returns, and compassionate leadership.

Building those programs requires a sustained commitment, says Dixon.




Animal Humane Society provides extensive medical treatments, behavior modification, and foster care for animals with special challenges, ensuring that even the most difficult-to-place dogs, cats, and critters have a chance at adoption.

“There’s no easy fix. You can’t make meaningful progress without a long-term, comprehensive approach.”

But diligence and determination pay off. Initiatives like Bound for Home and Doing More for Animals helped AHS increase its placement rate from 59 percent in 2007 to more than 91 percent in 2015, saving thousands of lives each year.

Progress didn’t come overnight. “Step by step, through incremental

advances and giant leaps forward, we’ve been able to do more and more for animals. As we reach each new milestone we’re invigorated and inspired to do even more. The change has been transformational.”

Dixon smiles, her voice swelling with emotion as she recounts that journey. “I’m so proud of how far we’ve come. Together, we’re building a legacy for animals and for AHS.” 





## Report to the Community July 2014-June 2015



## IN 2015 ANIMAL HUMANE SOCIETY REACHED A HARD-FOUGHT MILESTONE.

Over the past decade we've worked toward an ambitious goal: saving 90 percent of the animals that come through our doors. Month by month we've inched toward that goal, building momentum with each new advance. This year we've surpassed it, placing 91.2 percent of the animals in our care.

Your generosity has fueled our progress. As we have reduced intake and found more proactive ways to help both people and animals, we've been able to devote more resources to the needs of individual animals while still providing exceptional care for the population as a whole.

Over the past 18 months we've invested in expanded behavior programs, advanced medical treatments, foster care, and post-adoption support to help even the most challenged animals get a second chance.

As a result of these new investments, our humane euthanasia rate dropped from 16.6 percent to 8.8 percent in the past year.

But that incredible advance is not all we have to celebrate. This report includes highlights from each of our program areas—and you'll find accomplishments and aspirations worth cheering on every page.

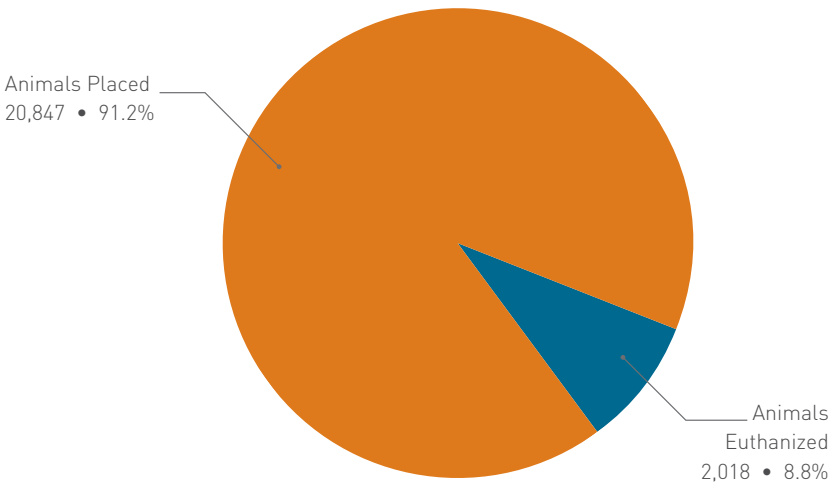
Your support makes it all possible. [Thank you.](#)



# About the Animals

## COMPANION ANIMAL OUTCOMES

TOTAL: 22,865



More than 91 percent of the animals in our care during FY15 were placed in the community. As a result, euthanasia fell to its lowest level ever.

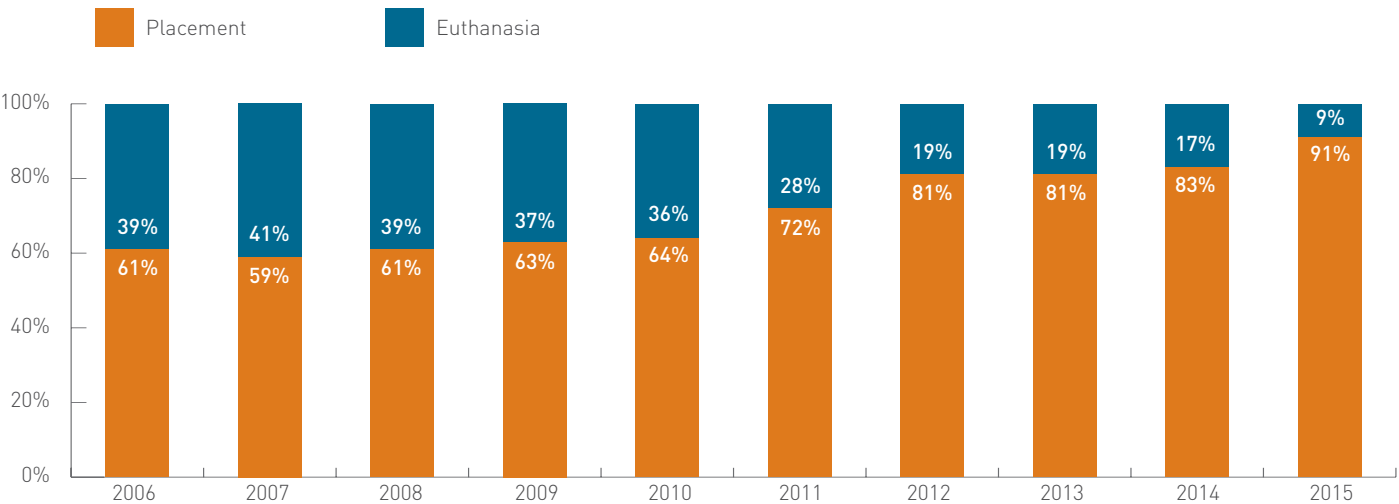
## PLACEMENT RATE (LIVE RELEASE RATE)

Animal Humane Society achieved a Placement Rate of 91.2 percent during the 12 months ending June 30, 2015. Placement Rate is calculated using the Asilomar Live Release Rate formula, which is calculated by dividing total live outcomes (adoptions, transfers, and

returns) by total outcomes (total live outcomes plus euthanasia). Companion animals surrendered for end-of-life services (owner requested euthanasia) are excluded from this calculation.

Over the past decade, Animal Humane Society's Placement Rate has improved

dramatically, from 59 percent in FY07 to more than 91 percent in FY15. Our efforts to help more animals become adoptable through medical, behavioral, and foster programs has reduced euthanasia by more than 78 percent.

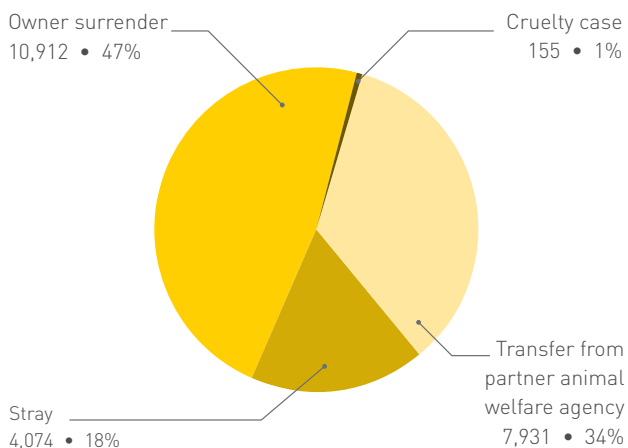


## COMPANION ANIMAL INTAKE

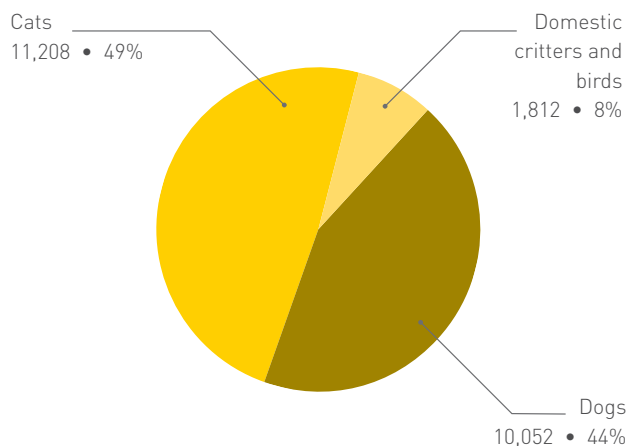
The number of companion animals in our shelters increased by 8 percent in FY15.

TOTAL: 23,072

### Companion animal intake by reason for surrender



### Companion animal intake by species



AHS helps thousands of dogs, cats, and critters in need find loving homes each year – and no animal is ever turned away. AHS takes in every animal surrendered to us regardless of its health, age, breed or behavior. This commitment to open admission guarantees shelter and care to thousands of animals that would otherwise have no safe refuge.

## OTHER INTAKE PROGRAMS

Although the focus of our work is companion animals, we also partnered with the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of Minnesota to provide emergency care for 1,474 injured and orphaned wild animals. In addition, 1,946 pets were surrendered for compassionate end-of-life euthanasia, a program for pet owners with limited incomes who can't afford the same service at a private-practice veterinarian. Animals served by these two programs are not included in the companion animal intake, placement, and euthanasia statistics in this report.



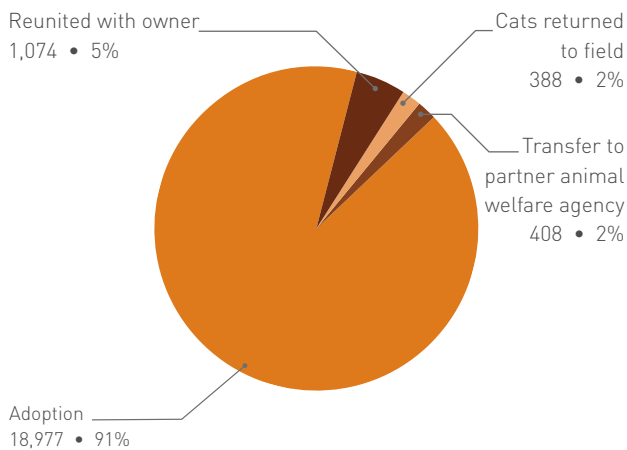


## COMPANION ANIMAL PLACEMENT

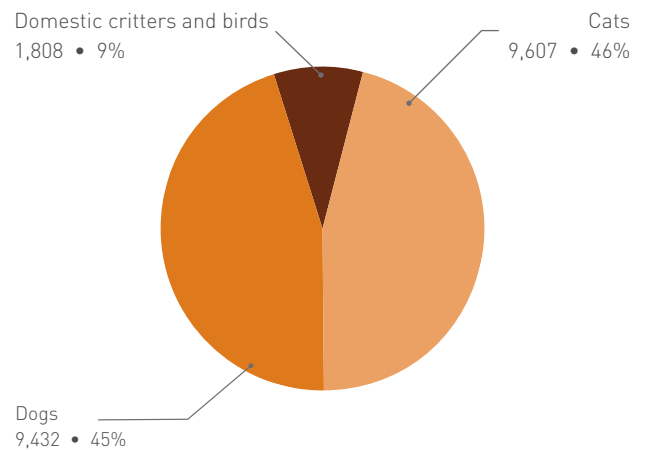
The number of companion animals placed increased by 18 percent in FY15.

TOTAL: 20,847

Companion animal placement by type



Companion animal placement by species

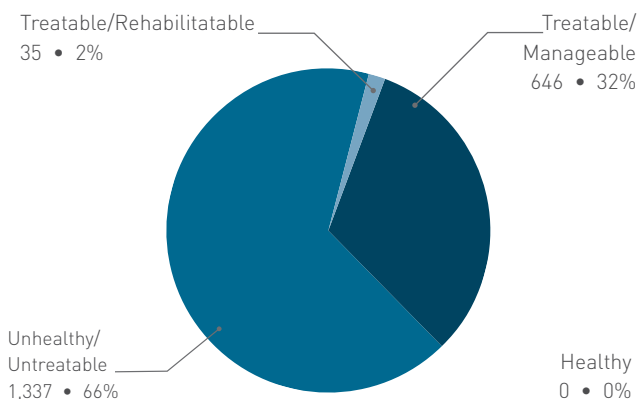


## COMPANION ANIMAL EUTHANASIA

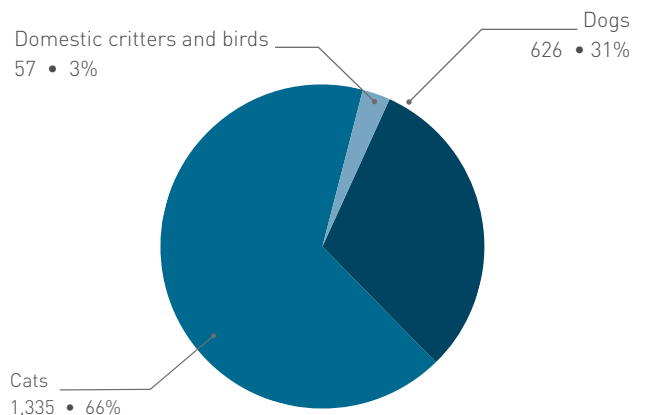
The number of companion animals euthanized decreased by 42 percent in FY15.

TOTAL: 2,018

Euthanasia by reason



Euthanasia by species



AHS is committed to taking in every animal in need. Unfortunately, some animals come to us with severe or untreatable illnesses or behavior issues that prevent us from placing them in the community. If we cannot help an animal become healthy or suitable for placement, humane euthanasia is the most compassionate alternative. AHS has not euthanized a healthy animal for any reason since 2011. There is no time limit for animals in our care.



# Program Accomplishments

## ADOPTION AND SURRENDER

In FY15 we helped 18,977 animals find new homes through adoption—more than any other year in the organization’s history.

### **Adoption Experience**

Adoption centers in all five sites got a colorful new look in FY15, with glass doors and bright colony rooms that encourage visitors to engage with animals. New retail fixtures and comfortable seating areas provide an inviting space for customers to complete adoptions. The adoption process has also been overhauled to provide a more pleasant, personalized, and informative experience.

### **Adoption Preparation**

Our behavior modification programs helped 687 dogs and 611 cats prepare for adoption, overcoming challenges from fear and aggression to litter box problems.

### **Spay/Neuter**

AHS veterinarians performed 12,078 sterilization surgeries on animals in our care, ensuring that every dog, cat, and rabbit is spayed or neutered before going to its new home.

### **Foster Care**

More than 350 foster volunteers cared for 2,685 animals who needed time to recover from surgery or medical treatment, grow old enough for adoption, or prepare for a new home.





## PET SERVICES

Animal Humane Society offers programs to serve all stages of an animal's life.

### **Pet Helpline**

The AHS Pet Helpline (952-HELP-PET) handled 34,188 incoming calls, facilitating surrender appointments and providing free caring and compassionate advice and resources to help with everything from solving behavior problems to finding pet-friendly housing.

### **Training School**

AHS offers more than 70 family-friendly pet training classes each week, along with one-on-one training and socialization sessions, therapy animal courses, playgroups, and rabbit agility classes. In FY15, 1,261 pets attended classes through AHS's Training School.

### **Animal House Boarding**

Animal House, our pet boarding facility in Golden Valley, was home last year to 2,971 pet guests, including dogs, cats, rabbits, ferrets and other small animals.

### **Kindest Cut**

Kindest Cut, operating in partnership with AHS, performed 13,340 spay/neuter surgeries and treated 2,126 patients in their wellness clinic, all at reduced costs for people in need.



## Program Accomplishments (continued)

### RESCUE

Aiding animals in critical situations is core to AHS's work.

#### **Humane Investigations**

AHS's Humane Investigations unit responds to reports of possible animal cruelty or neglect throughout Minnesota. During FY15, our humane agents received 1,534 requests for assistance and opened 529 formal cases. Investigations took AHS agents into 64 Minnesota counties, impacting the lives of 4,666 animals.

#### **Partnerships**

AHS collaborates with more than 150 animal welfare organizations in Minnesota and other states. More than 60

rescue organizations assisted AHS by taking in 708 animals that required specialized long-term care. And when other animal welfare facilities are too crowded or are unable to place animals, they call AHS for help. In FY15, we took in 7,214 animals from 114 organizations.

#### **Wildlife**

In addition to caring for domestic animals, AHS partnered with the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of Minnesota to provide emergency care for 1,474 injured and orphaned wild animals.





## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Animal Humane Society works with individuals and organizations across Minnesota to create a more humane world for animals.

### Outreach

Community Outreach offers education programs and free or low-cost services that empower low-income pet owners and improve the lives of pets in under-served communities. These programs served more than 2,700 families in Frogtown and East St. Paul. As a result, 1,481 animals received free spay/neuter surgeries and 1,015 pets received care at free wellness clinics.

### Education

AHS offers programs that foster humane values and compassion for animals, including day camps, a youth club,

scout programs, and other activities for kids and families. Our educational programs served 12,160 people, including 2,253 students through programs in schools and 1,010 in summer camps.

### Community Cats

A new Community Cats program, launched in October 2014, focuses on reducing euthanasia and providing alternative solutions for feral and free-roaming felines through return-to-field and trap-neuter-return programs. This served 592 cats in its first year.



## Program Accomplishments (continued)

### COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The support of loyal donors and friends makes our work possible.

#### Volunteers

Volunteers are critical to our success. A total of 2,483 volunteers contributed 163,515 hours at all five of our sites to help AHS achieve its mission.

#### Donors

Every gift makes a difference. In FY15, 46,932 individual donors contributed more than \$6.4 million to Animal Humane Society. In addition, donors who included AHS in their estate plans contributed more than \$2.4 million in bequests.

#### Philanthropic Events

More than 9,000 people and 3,000 pets attended the Walk for Animals on May 2, raising more than \$1 million to support

AHS. Our two other signature events, Wine Dinner and Whisker Whirl, raised an additional \$520,325.

#### Young Professionals

Launched in 2015, The Pack is a new group of young professionals that gather to learn about, take part in, and advocate for the work of AHS while creating an environment for animal lovers to share ideas and build relationships.

#### Advocates

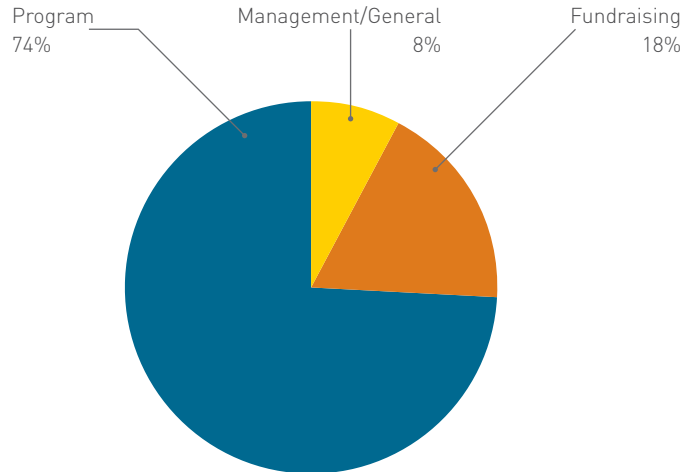
Community support continues to grow online, where 4,169 Animal Advocates, 83,247 Facebook fans, 4,574 Twitter followers, 4,965 Instagram followers, and 3,721 YouTube subscribers shared their passion for AHS.





The Minnesota Charities Review Council's Standards of Accountability state that at least 70% of an organization's annual expenses should be for program activity with not more than 30% for management, general, and fundraising expenses combined. Animal Humane Society exceeded this standard by directing 74% of our expenses back into programming for the animals and our community.

# Financials



## ANIMAL HUMANE SOCIETY STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

For the 12 months ended June 30, 2015

### SUPPORT AND REVENUES

Adoption fees and program revenue	5,468,361
Contributions	6,447,057
Wills and estates	2,422,821
In-kind contributions	335,162
Special events and promotions	1,072,664
Investment gain (loss)	65,950
Dividend and interest income	122,912
Other	221,290

**TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUES** 16,156,217

### EXPENSES

Program services:	
Rescue and outreach	1,000,639
Adoption and surrender	9,478,771
Pet services	765,695
Supporting services:	
Management and general	1,212,438
Fundraising	2,710,591
Total supporting services	3,923,029

**TOTAL EXPENSES** 15,168,134

**CHANGE IN NET ASSETS** 988,083



The mission of Animal Humane Society is to engage the hearts, hands, and minds of the community to help animals.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tom Hoch, Chair  
Carolyn Smith, Past Chair  
Maureen McDonough, Vice Chair  
Paul Kaminski, Secretary  
Scott Schroepfer, Treasurer  
Scott Aebischer  
Dr. Trevor Ames  
Dr. Bianca Fine  
Lisa Goodman  
David Gutzke  
John Huber  
Jim Lane  
Cyndi Leshner  
Jodi Lux  
Lia Melrose  
Susan Palombo  
Dr. Ned Patterson  
Damon Schramm  
Tim Taffe  
Tina Wilcox  
Donna Zimmerman  
Janelle Dixon, President & CEO

## LEADERSHIP

Janelle Dixon, President & CEO  
Eileen Lay, Chief Operating & Financial Officer  
Lisa Bonds, Chief Advancement Officer  
Kathy Mock, Chief Government Affairs & Community Engagement Officer

## AREA SERVED

Animal Humane Society serves animals and people in the seven-county metro area and beyond from its facilities in Anoka, Hennepin, Ramsey, Washington and Wright counties. The Humane Investigations unit provides services throughout Minnesota and western Wisconsin.



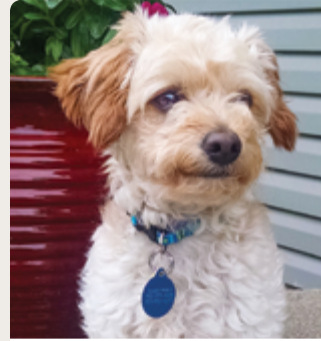




Johann



Mabel



Monk



Piper



Moose



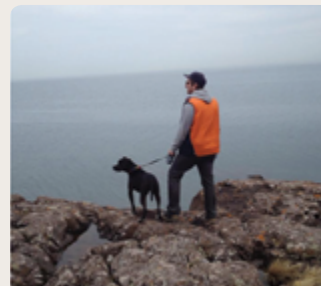
Mosby



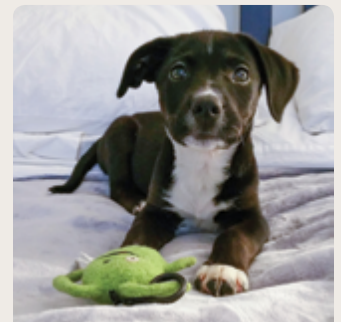
Xena



Mowgli &amp; Oliver



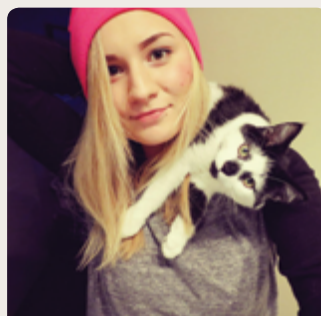
George



Scout



Taylor



Winston



Wiggles &amp; Waffles



Bean

## There's no place like home



There is nothing we love more than reading updates about animals adopted from Animal Humane Society. We are thrilled to hear about their new lives and see how happy (and spoiled) they are in their new homes.

Rather than keeping all of that joy to ourselves, we are sharing these amazing stories and photos on our "Happy Tails" blog on Tumblr. Visit [animalhumanesociety.org/happytails](http://animalhumanesociety.org/happytails) and prepare to have your heart warmed!

Submit your adoption story and photos at [animalhumanesociety.org/stories](http://animalhumanesociety.org/stories). We'd love to hear from you!

# Give a gift that truly matters

this holiday season

As an animal lover, you've certainly felt the unconditional love that our animals give us. Our wish is that every animal is able to experience that same kindness and compassion. Your donation — in any amount — will make an impact on the lives of deserving animals in our community. For as little as \$10, you can share love and joy with animals in our shelters.

And when you make a monthly sustaining donation, your gift will continue to provide resources for these animals year-round.

Thank you for caring for animals in our community.

*Please give generously.*



\$20

\$20 provides four dogs with heartworm tests so we can diagnose and treat this potentially serious disease.



\$50

\$50 makes it possible for an animal in critical condition to receive the emergency surgery they need to survive.



\$10

\$10 gives a cat in our care fun enrichment activities to help pass the time while awaiting a new home.





\$100

\$100 supports an animal facing behavioral challenges with the training they need to prepare them for adoption.



\$250

\$250 supplies X-rays needed to diagnose two injured animals so we can provide them with prompt treatment.



\$500

\$500 provides basic housing and care for five dogs over the course of an average length of stay in our care.



\$1,000

\$1,000 provides sterilization surgeries for 20 feral cats in our Community Cats program.

**Any amount helps Animal Humane Society respond with kindness for animals in need.**

Send your gift to Animal Humane Society using the donation envelope enclosed, online at [animalhumanesociety.org/holidaygift](http://animalhumanesociety.org/holidaygift) or call 763-489-2210.

animal tracks



animal humane society

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2016

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A GALA TO BENEFIT



animal humane society

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2016  
THE DEPOT, MINNEAPOLIS

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or call 763-432-4842 or email  
[whiskerwhirl@animalhumanesociety.org](mailto:whiskerwhirl@animalhumanesociety.org)