



**PAWSIBILITIES<sup>®</sup>**  
Humane Society of Greater Akron

2015 | Annual Report



RESCUE  
HEAL  
ADOPT

## A LETTER FROM OUR PRESIDENT/CEO



As I reflect on 2015, I am overwhelmed with pride and a sense of true accomplishment. Every single day, we advocate and care for Summit County's mistreated, discarded, and forgotten animals and give them the loving, safe futures they deserve. The dedication, compassion, and selflessness of our staff, volunteers, adopters, and supporters is a continual inspiration.

This year was also extra special for me - I adopted Sophie. Although I adore each of our rescued animals, Sophie's sweet disposition and heartbreaking story of survival instantly melted my heart. I knew that we would make the perfect pair.

Sophie had been abandoned in the middle of winter and left to fend for herself on the streets of Akron. With nowhere to go, Sophie sat down on a stoop, her thin body shivering from the blistering cold. Our Humane Officers found Sophie that day, downtrodden, frightened, and struggling to survive. That stoop would be the last place that Sophie would ever again experience suffering.

Today, Sophie faces no hardship. Although she can often be found lounging on the couch, she loves playing outside and snuggling with her feline siblings. Sophie also doesn't let me out her sight! She is my heart - I am overjoyed to have her in my life. Along with Sophie, over 1,400 PHSGA rescued animals found their own adoptive families and happy endings in 2015!

Our success as an animal welfare organization is made possible by the incredible support and service we receive from our generous community. You - our adopters, donors, and volunteers - are vital to the success of our mission, and we are exceedingly grateful for your confidence in our work.

Thank you for being a part of our story.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Diane Johnson".

Diane Johnson  
President/CEO



# ABOUT US

Since 1968, PAWSibilities®, Humane Society of Greater Akron (PHSGA), has proudly served as Summit County's leading resource for humane law enforcement, animal welfare education, and animal adoption services. We advocate and care for those who cannot do so themselves.

We are the only animal rescue organization in Summit County that enforces the legal mandate, provided in the Ohio Revised Code, to rescue and protect abused, abandoned, and neglected companion animals. Our Humane Officers investigate reports of animal cruelty, prosecute offenders, provide humane law education to the public, and respond to emergency calls.

Within our 33,000 sq. ft. facility in Twinsburg, Ohio, our staff and volunteers diligently work to medically treat and rehabilitate our community's animals in the most desperate need of help. Our efforts provide nearly 2,000 animals each year with the chance at leading happy, healthy, and safe lives. We are a no time limit animal rescue organization - all of our adoptable animals are cared for until they find their new home.



# MISSION

PAWSibilities®, Humane Society of Greater Akron is the trusted caretaker and advocate for the abused, neglected, and abandoned animals of Summit County.

# VISION

Create a community where animals are treated humanely.

# CORE VALUES

## Compassion

We demonstrate kindness and respect to the animals in our community. We rescue and care for abused, neglected, and abandoned animals. We heal, rehabilitate, and strive to ensure the futures of these animals are filled with safety and love.

## Influence

As the voice of the animals we serve, we bring awareness of their plight. We promote continuous improvement in animal welfare by communicating and advocating best practices in animal care. As leaders, we set the standard of excellence for the treatment of animals in our community.

## Engagement

Our mission is only achieved with the collaborative efforts of our community, staff, and volunteers. Our community partners support and promote the mission as well as report suspected abuse to us. Our staff and volunteers are critical to our mission's success and as such, we promise to provide them with a supportive and positive work environment.





# RESCUE

PAWSibilities®, Humane Society of Greater Akron is the only animal rescue organization in Summit County that enforces the legal mandate, provided in the Ohio Revised Code, to rescue and protect abused, abandoned, and neglected companion animals. Our two Humane Officers are graduates of Ohio's Peace Officer Training for Humane Agents and have a combined 33 years of experience serving their community.

Our Humane Officers are dedicated to connecting with our community and providing the necessary education and resources for our citizens to comply with humane laws. In situations of animal cruelty offenses, our Humane Officers have the full legal authority to perform arrests, seize animals, collect evidence, and file charges against offenders. They work closely with prosecutors to seek justice for animal victims. We rely heavily upon our community to report suspected animal abuse offenses to our Officers. The diligence and compassion of concerned citizens allows us to end animal suffering and save lives. As needed, our Humane Officers also respond to emergency medical calls and rescue stray animals suffering from severe illness and injury.

Our Humane Officers are proudly responsible for protecting the animals in our community who cannot protect themselves.



**792**

Animal cruelty investigations

**396**

Follow up investigations

**215**

Emergency medical responses for sick and injured stray animals

**1,876**

Total animals rescued by PHSGA in 2015

**348**

Dogs, cats, and other animals rescued from abuse, neglect, and abandonment

**770**

Sick and injured stray animals brought to our facility by compassionate citizens

## Neglected livestock receive justice

Our mission to rescue victims of animal cruelty extends beyond cats and dogs - we fight for the rights for all domestic animals.

Responding to frantic reports of a wandering calf near a busy roadway in June, local police and our Humane Officers discovered an unexpected situation. Not only was a calf loose, but he and ten goats were found without access to food, water, or shelter at an automotive repair shop in Boston Township. The livestock had not been properly fed or cared for, leading our Humane Officers to seize the animals under violations of animal cruelty laws.

Once safely in our care, each animal was examined by our veterinarian. They were found to be underweight and suffering from the effects of prolonged inadequate care. The eleven animals were transferred into the care of our rescue partners at Happy Trails Farm Animal Sanctuary for specialized attention and proper shelter while the case moved through Stow Municipal Courts.

Following their legal surrender at the end of October, the calf and goats were free to find new homes. They did not have to wait long! Within a month, they were adopted by caring, responsible families and now live peacefully on idyllic farm settings.

Court proceedings concluded on November 30, 2015 with the owner of the animals being found guilty of nine counts of animal cruelty. Along with an order to pay restitution and complete community service, the offender is forbidden from owning farm animals for five years.



## Horrific discovery leads to second chances for 77 animals

One evening in early August, Akron police officers were called to investigate a home in Goodyear Heights after neighbors complained of offensive and worrisome odors coming from the property. Upon investigation, the officers quickly realized the cause of the stench - the residence was overwhelmed with a shocking case of animal hoarding, abuse, and neglect. Our Humane Officers were quickly called to assist.

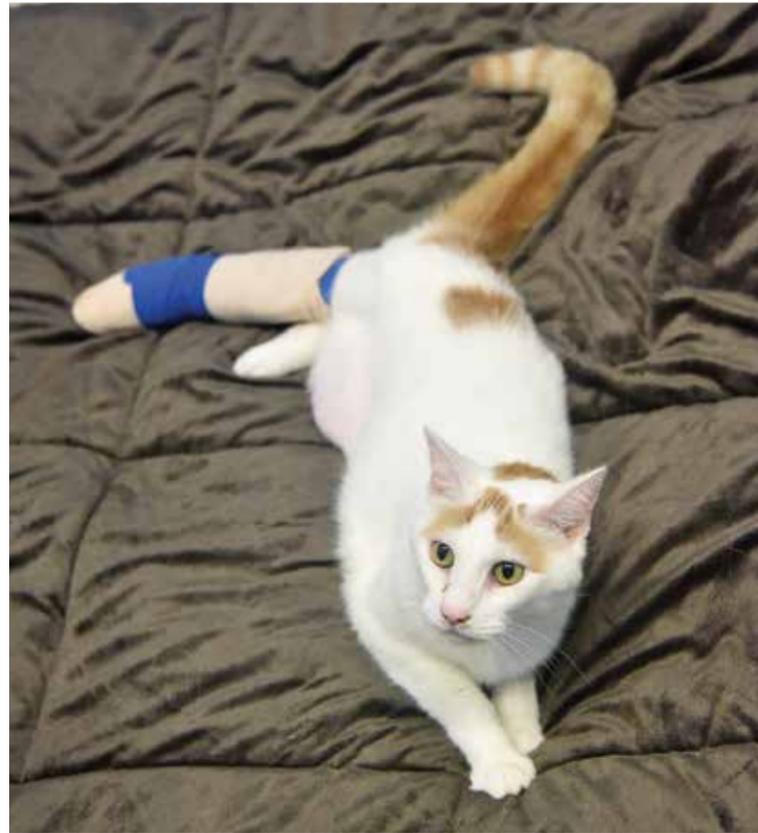


Hidden among the filth, clutter, and waste, Humane Officers found a total of 24 cats, 4 dogs, 3 guinea pigs, 1 gecko, 2 tarantulas, and 43 fish. Each animal, as it was captured, was transported to our facility to be evaluated by our veterinary staff. Removing all of the animals from the home took a grueling 13 days, as many animals were well hidden, frightened, and unsocialized. Along with the 77 live animals rescued, our Humane Officers tragically recovered the bodies of several deceased cats discarded among the clutter. The owner of the animals was arrested and charged with multiple counts of animal cruelty. Her home was ultimately condemned,

The 77 animals received much needed veterinary care, nutrition, clean shelter, and love. Even though they had experienced unimaginable neglect and abuse, nearly all of the rescued animals were able to make full recoveries. Happy and healthy, they were adopted into loving homes, putting their past behind them.

On October 21, 2015, the defendant plead guilty to animal cruelty - she is prohibited from ever again owning animals.

# HEAL



We are dedicated to providing each of our rescued animals with skilled, compassionate veterinary attention. Due to our focused mission, the majority of our animals are in desperate need of our medical services. Each day, our experienced veterinary team assesses new intakes, drafts treatment plans, performs surgeries, conducts medical exams, and completes a daily round to check each of the hundreds of animals in our care.

Our Medical, Surgical, and Isolation Suite, built in 2011, is fully equipped to address the medical needs of our animal population. Since its creation, over 20,000 lifesaving veterinary exams and surgeries have been performed within our facility. Along with receiving lifesaving care to heal wounds, parasitic infections, and illnesses, each of our animals is given appropriate vaccinations, microchipped, and spay or neutered by our veterinary team in preparation for their adoption.

**1,242**

Veterinary surgeries performed

**5,141**

Medical exams conducted

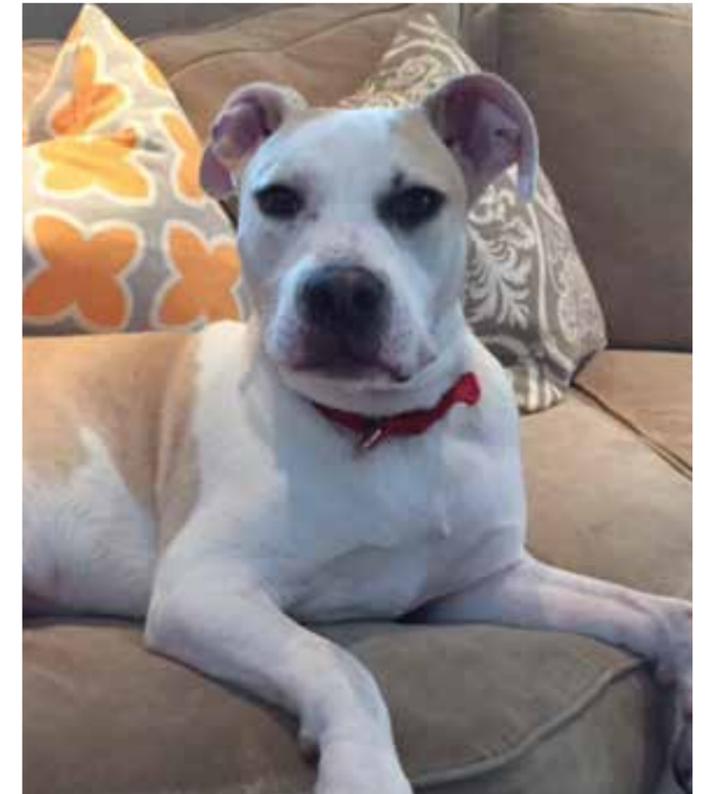
## Nicholas, the Holiday miracle

The moment we met Nicholas just two days before Thanksgiving, his condition took our breath away. Nicholas was severely emaciated, weak, and frightened - he was not expected to survive. He had been intentionally starved, neglected, and abused. Although he was estimated to be about a year old, Nicholas weighed only 14 pounds and had a very small stature from a lack of adequate nutrition.

For days after his rescue, Nicholas still could not walk or lift his head, but he mustered up enough energy to wag his tail in greeting towards those caring for him. His resilience and determination for life were astonishing.

Nicholas's life was saved by the emergency medical attention and treatments from our veterinary staff. He slowly gained weight, developed strength, and was soon able to stand, walk, and bark!

A generous, loving foster family quickly offered Nicholas their home to complete his recovery. After only a month's time, he had made a remarkable transformation. His neglectful past behind him, Nicholas was finally free to let his gentle, friendly, and goofy personality shine. Nicholas never had to return to the shelter - his foster family could not bear to part with him. Nicholas was officially adopted on Christmas Eve!



**277**

Diagnostic tests

**336**

Average daily animal census



## ENRICH

Along with healing physical wounds and ailments, we are committed to enriching the mental wellbeing of our rescued animals. With pasts often filled with neglect and abuse, our animals' first experiences with love and respect happens within our facility. We nurture confidence, trust, and happiness, preparing our animals for successful adoptions.

Each of our animals is provided with appropriate socialization, enrichment, and training. Staff and volunteers shower our animals with affection while they wait for a family of their own. Our animals receive individualized attention and enjoy playing, pets, treats, toys, and plenty of time outside of their enclosures. With patience and understanding, we allow our animals to become comfortable with their new surroundings and learn how to develop trust and relationships with humans.

Along with daily walks and socialization time, our canines also have the opportunity to go to school! With the guidance of a staff Certified Professional Dog Trainer, experienced volunteers work one-on-one with dogs who need a bit of extra attention. A variety of training programs are offered and tailored to teach confidence, basic manners, tricks, and important skills in preparation for their future in a home.

Time spent with our animals also provides us with a comprehensive understanding of their individual personalities, preferences, and limitations. Such knowledge is instrumental in matching adopters with appropriate animals, leading to more successful adoptions.

**4,987**

Volunteer hours of canine socialization

**902**

Volunteer hours spent in canine training class

**1,726**

Volunteer hours of feline socialization

## Backyard transformation enhances PHSGA enrichment services

Since relocating to our current facility in 2010, our canine backyard enrichment area has undergone continuous improvement, but this year's changes have stood out from the rest!

In August, our backyard was transformed with the help of Turfscape, Inc and an eager brigade of volunteers. The group installed a drainage system in the yard, laid crushed limestone in our off-leash areas, and beautified the space with grass, trees, shrubs, and mulch. A few months later, we further improved the backyard by installing a paved walking path increasing safety and overall appearance.

Our canine backyard enrichment area is used daily by all of our dogs and is essential to maintaining the health and happiness of our animals. Before these renovations, our enrichment yard would become very difficult to navigate after rainstorms and snowfall. With the new improvements, the entire canine backyard enrichment area can now be safely enjoyed year-round by our dogs, staff, and volunteers!



# ADOPT



Our final goal for each of our rescued animals is adoption into a loving, safe home. We are dedicated to achieving the best possible outcome for our animals. There is no better feeling than witnessing an animal who was once a victim become a cherished member of a family. We are a no time limit animal rescue organization; all of our adoptable animals are cared for until they find their new home.

Prior to their adoption, each of our animals is vaccinated, spayed or neutered, de-wormed, de-fleaded, and microchipped. All of our dogs over six months of age receive a temperament assessment by our Certified Professional Dog Trainer to arrange for suitable adoption placement. We strive to match prospective adopters with the appropriate pet for their family, lifestyle, and expectations. Prospective adopters receive individualized attention by our Adoption Counselors throughout the adoption process to provide important information such as

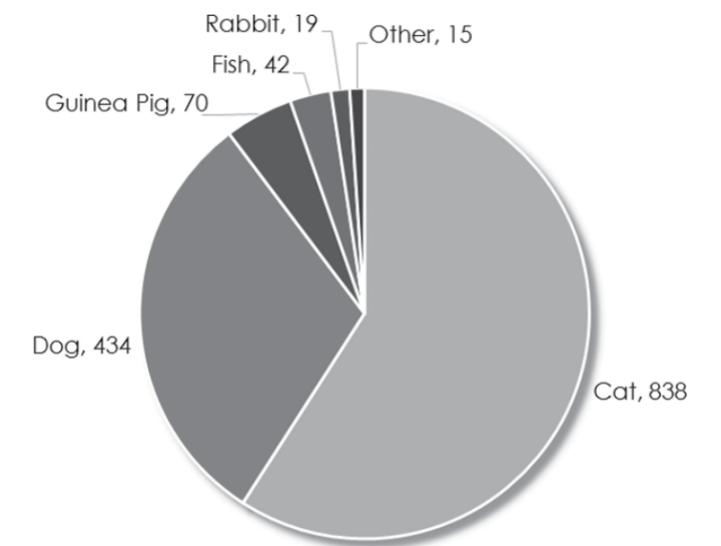
an insight into an animal's personality, advice on how to introduce an animal to a new environment, and a review of an animal's medical history. These efforts increase the chances for successful and permanent placement of animals in loving families prepared for the responsibility of pet ownership.

Our Director of Behavior and Outreach is available throughout the life of the pet for behavioral counseling and assistance. We continually provide advice and support to our adoptive families. Dog training courses are also offered to our adopters at a discounted cost to teach obedience and manners. If for any reason an adoption placement does not work, we always accept our animals back into our care to find a more appropriate home.

**1,418**  
Adoptions

**96**  
Animal transfers to  
partnering rescues

## 2015 Adoptions



# EDUCATE

We firmly believe that education is a key component to improving our community and preventing animal cruelty, abuse, and neglect. As a part of our volunteer program, we sustain an active community education program aimed at introducing children and various community groups to responsible and respectful treatment of animals. Each year, our volunteer Speakers' Bureau as well as our President/CEO conduct interactive, small group education programs at our facility and throughout communities in Summit County. Educational programs cover topics such as dog bite prevention, basic pet care, respectful treatment of animals, pet safety, animal behavior, the importance of spay/neuter, and how children can help support animal rescue efforts. We always welcome

topic suggestions and strive to communicate relevant information tailored to the interests of our audience. On-site programs conclude with a private tour of our facility, allowing participants to meet our animals and use their new skills and knowledge in practice.

Our Board of Directors implemented a new initiative in 2015 aimed to increase education programs by 10% each year and expand our presence and influence in our community. With our educational programs, an educational blog on our website, educational posts on our official Facebook page, and monthly education bulletin boards in our facility, we proudly serve as our community's leading resource for information regarding the humane treatment of animals.



**224**

Community education programs



## VOLUNTEER

Our volunteers are critical to our daily operations and help our animals prepare for their future. Volunteer opportunities include animal enrichment, socialization, dog walking, event planning, fostering, laundry services, administrative assistance, facility maintenance, and more. The efforts of volunteers are instrumental to the success of every facet of our operation.

We are very proud to sustain a volunteer program that is continuously expanding and welcoming new, eager participants. Our volunteers give so much of themselves to make our mission a reality. We are immensely grateful for their time, compassion, and dedication to our rescued animals!

**499**

Active volunteers

**29,635**

Hours of donated time

**47%**

Increase in volunteer participation



# FINANCIALS

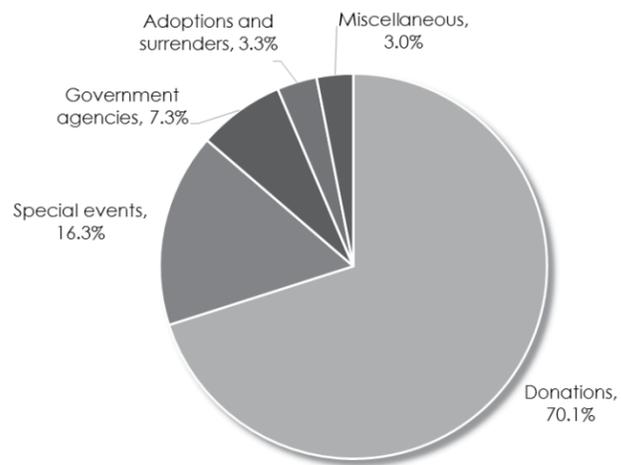
## Income

Public support		
Donations	\$1,401,889	70.1%
Special Events	\$326,126	16.3%
Revenues		
Government Agencies	\$145,275	7.3%
Adoptions and Surrenders	\$66,724	3.3%
Miscellaneous	\$60,995	3.0%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$2,001,009</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

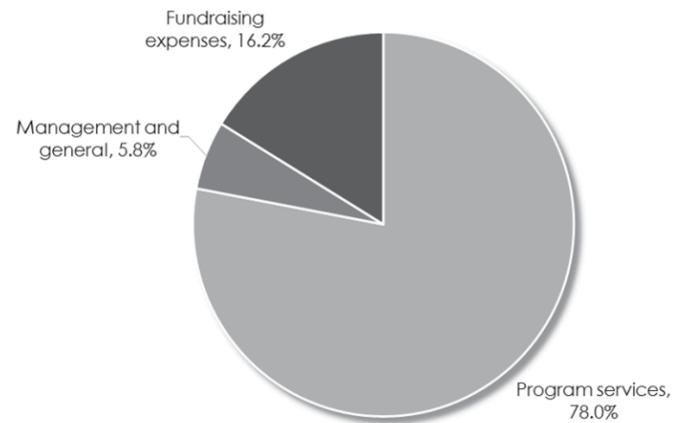
## Expenses:

Program Services	\$1,386,999	78.0%
Supporting Services		
Management and General	\$102,835	5.8%
Fundraising Expenses	\$288,484	16.2%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,778,318</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## 2015 Income



## 2015 Expenses



RESCUE  
HEAL  
ADOPT

## Thank you

We are very pleased to acknowledge the following foundations who generously supported our work in 2015:

Akron Community Foundation  
Rennick and Dee Andreoli Family Fund  
Lisle M. Buckingham Endowment Fund  
James G. Robertson Fund  
The Allstate Foundation  
Annabelle Foundation  
Lucy and Emily Beasley Charitable Trust  
Glenn R. and Alice V. Boggess Memorial Foundation  
The Mary S. and David C. Corbin Foundation  
Enterprise Holdings Foundation  
FirstMerit Foundation  
The Grainger Foundation  
The Lehner Family Foundation  
Frank and Virginia Jordan Marshall Foundation  
The Matthews Family Foundation  
The Maynard Family Foundation  
Laura R. and Lucian Q. Moffitt Foundation  
The R.C. Musson and Katharine M. Musson Charitable Foundation  
OMNOVA Solutions Foundation  
Pedigree Foundation  
Petco Foundation  
Petfinder Foundation  
The Pets for the Elderly Foundation  
Charles E. and Mabel M. Ritchie Memorial Foundation  
The Kenneth A. Scott Charitable Trust, a KeyBank Trust  
The Sisler McFawn Foundation  
Lloyd L. and Louise K. Smith Foundation  
The Helen F. Stoiler and Louis Stolier Family Foundation  
The Weitzel Family Foundation  
The Welty Family Foundation

## Board of Directors

Lisa A. Hibbs	<i>Chair</i>
Judy Steiner	<i>Vice Chair</i>
Patrick Weschler	<i>Secretary</i>
Valerie Wawrin	<i>Treasurer</i>
Steve Barry	<i>Ex-Officio</i>
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Mark Fechtel	
Dawn Hartman	
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Theodore Moore	
Jim Sebastian	
Judge Mary F. Spicer	
Erin Wojno Demiray	
Bob Zajac	

## President/CEO

Diane Johnson

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Brittany Gidley Photography  
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PAWSibilities, Humane Society of Greater Akron is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization. (Federal EIN: 23-7060744)