

The Paw Press

2022 Spring Edition



High-profile cats kept people talking in early 2022

The first quarter at GHS has been as busy as ever, with animal intake numbers trending closer to **pre-pandemic levels**. Early indicators are showing a return to 2019 numbers, which means more animals coming in - and more animals being adopted.

So far this year, the biggest stories have involved cats. First, in early February, GHS took in **18 Siamese cats** from one location. They were sick with upper respiratory illnesses, and it took quite a bit of time before they were ready to find their Happy Tails. As of May 1st, 15 of the 18 Siamese cats had been adopted - while the remaining three require some extra time to socialize in foster care.

In early March, around 25 cats came to GHS from a hoarding situation. These cats were known as the "gem" cats, as we named each one of them after a gemstone. One of those cats, Moonstone, gave birth to four kittens in our care: Castor, Orion, Celeste, and Sidra. Exactly one week after Moonstone arrived, another cat arrived with her litter of 10 kittens. The kittens were just a few days old. We named this mama April, and she struggled to feed her large litter. After losing two of her kittens, Animal Care Manager Samantha Westphal had an idea: let's move two of April's babies over to nursing mama Moonstone and see if she can help raise April's babies. Then each mama would have six babies to nurse, and we would hopefully see April's kittens start to thrive. Well, the plan worked! And we caught the whole thing on video. The video of **Moonstone accepting April's kittens** has been the most successful social media post on the Guelph Humane Society's Facebook page to date! The video has reached nearly a million people, and we're so proud to share such a positive impact story. April, Moonstone, and the 12 kittens will all be ready for adoption this spring.



Saffron was the first of the 18 Siamese cats to be adopted.



One big happy family: Moonstone with her four babies, plus two foster babies, Robin & Bumblebee.



Kingo was found freezing and wet in an abandoned cat carrier in the west end of Guelph on April 14th.

Another story that received international attention was the arrival of **Kingo**. Kingo was discovered April 14th, in a too-small cat carrier in a water-filled ditch. He was cold and traumatized, and we released a message to the public that there is never an excuse for abandoning an animal. The message was shared by celebrities, and animal welfare groups as far away as Europe. Thankfully, Kingo recovered quickly - and his easy-going, friendly nature made him so beloved by staff. Kingo received many adoption applications, and found his Happy Tail by early May.

Does that bird *really* need your help?!

The busy wildlife season is upon us! The first wildlife babies to come into our care this year were orphaned squirrels at the end of March. We will see more rabbit and bird babies over the coming weeks.

Did you know that wildlife baby abduction rates are on the rise? Humans mean well, and they generally have the best intentions – but the best place for babies to be is with their mama. So it is extremely important that we are not interfering with babies if they are not actually orphaned. Every species of wildlife has their own methods of caring for their offspring, and we must avoid interfering unless necessary.

Let's talk about baby birds...

Nestlings may be sparsely feathered, and will still have some naked spots or "pin feathers" growing in. They cannot stand, hop, or perch yet. They need to still be in the nest. Birds cannot move their own babies, so if a nestling has fallen from the nest, you can help place it safely back in the nest.

Fledglings are older, and are mostly feathered (some might have some fuzzy feathers still). They are not fully grown, but are getting close to becoming independent from their parents. At this stage in their life, fledglings are exploring on the ground and practicing flying.

They hop around on their own. Their parents are still taking care of them and are usually close by. In fact, fledglings may chirp or peep as they're calling for their parents! If you see a fully feathered baby bird leave it be, unless it's obviously injured. The parents are nearby.

Not sure if the young bird you're seeing is a fledgling or a nestling? Please call GHS at 519-824-3091 before attempting to move the bird. Our staff can ask some questions, assess the situation, and send out an Animal Services Officer if needed.



Bunny promotions help drive adoptions in February and April

GHS, much like many rescues and shelters across Ontario, has experienced a dramatic increase in domestic rabbits in our care since early 2021. Last year we cared for three times the number of bunnies compared to previous years. That trend is continuing for 2022.

February is **Adopt a Rescued Rabbit Month**, so to encourage rabbit adoptions we released a series of educational "Bunny Basics" videos, along with a month-long \$50 adoption promotion. A spayed/neutered rabbit could be adopted for \$50, regular \$160. The promotion was so successful that we were able to find homes for 17 bunnies.

For most of March, the number of rabbits in our care was stable - but they skyrocketed once again in April. By April 13th we had announced a similar \$50 promotion, with lots of marketing to promote the nearly 20 rabbits we had available for adoption. The promotion was once again a success, and we were able to adopt out another 14 bunnies by the end of the month. That's 14 more bunny #HappyTails!



Kyle is one of more than 30 rabbits adopted from GHS since February 1st!



Rabbits Everest and Blossom had litters of bunnies while in our care. Look for baby bunnies, like Everest's babies here, to be up for adoption later on this spring.

Animals in need benefit from thoughtful couple's wedding gift

Imagine celebrating your special day, and helping the lives of vulnerable animals in return.

That's what Chris and Melissa Hill have done.

Chris and Melissa are newlyweds. They were married in a small service on May 4th, followed by a reception on May 7th. In between those two dates, they swung by the Guelph Humane Society to check out the cat cage they adopted as a celebration of their lives together.

"Melissa and I had been discussing wedding gifts and we realized we're fortunate enough to have everything we need," Chris says. "I thought it might be nice to do something different as my gift to her that celebrates our marriage, and supports a wonderful organization that we both care about. She loved the idea."

Chris and Melissa adopted a cat together from a local rescue almost six years ago. They named him Fezzik, after the character from *The Princess Bride* – a movie they both love.

"He completed our family and made Melissa a proud first-time cat mom," Chris says of Fezzik. "I work from home, so he's my work buddy - I can complain to him if I'm having a bad day, and he occasionally listens. For Melissa, he waits at the door every day when he hears her car and greets her with a loud but friendly meow to remind her she was missed. He's just perfect for us."

While they only have room for one cat at home, Chris and Melissa believe that adopting a cage is a way they can help give another animal a safe place to stay until they find their own Happy Tail.

"If we're able to help even one animal find their forever home by helping to support GHS and adopt a cage, we'd be so thrilled," Melissa adds. "Maybe someone will see our plaque and be inspired to adopt whoever is inside and complete their family."

Their plaque, which sits over one of the cages in the Cat Adoption Room, reads:

Fezzik chose us to adopt him and he completed our family. The Hill family hopes that whoever is in this cage can help you complete yours.

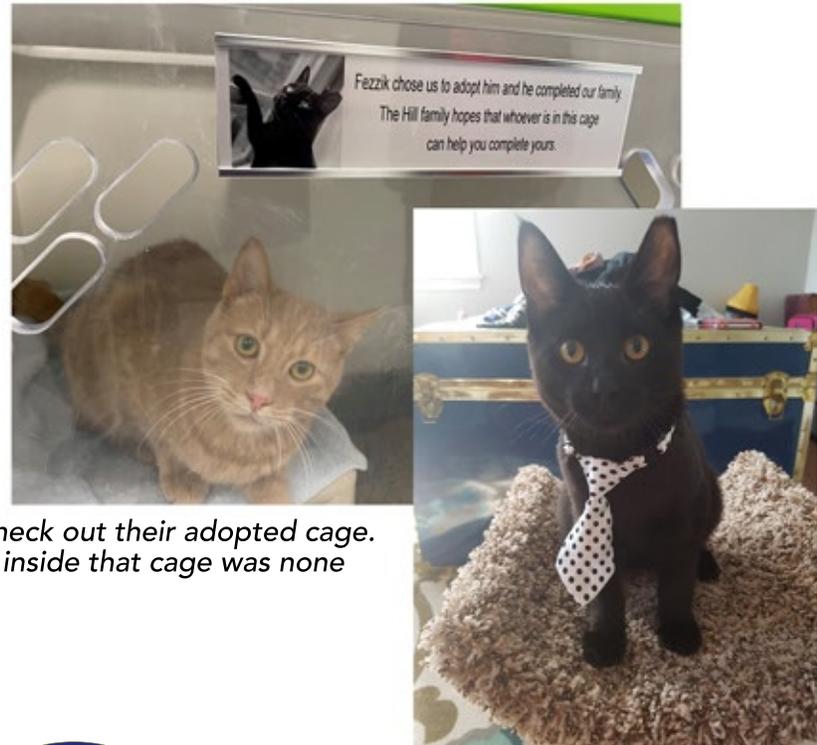
The Hills say they've already discussed forgoing traditional anniversary gifts in the future, and making renewing their cage adoption at GHS their annual gift to each other.

Congratulations to the newlyweds, Chris and Melissa. We wish them a lifetime of happiness, along with sweet Fezzik. And we are so grateful and honoured that they chose to support vulnerable animals in our community in such a thoughtful way.

Learn more about the Happy Tails Begin Here - Kennel Adoption Program at www.guelphhumane.ca/kennels.



Chris and Melissa Hill came to GHS on May 5th to check out their adopted cage. They were happy to see that the occupant currently inside that cage was none other than Kingo!



Fezzik was adopted from a local rescue almost 6 years ago. Chris and Melissa say he completed their family.

Did you know that you can include GHS in your Will? It's called Planned Giving. Learn more at www.guelphhumane.ca/Wills

Other ways for you to help support animals in need

In-person events are slowly starting back up again. Our first bottle drive of 2022 raised \$2,026.40 for vulnerable animals in our community. That's a new record for us! And you can start saving up your bottles again, as we are hoping to hold another bottle drive in early July.

We have several more fundraisers on the go this spring, including:



There's only a few days left to VOTE for your favourite animal pics in our GHS 2023 Calendar Contest. You can keep voting until 8pm on May 31st. Head on over to www.guelphhumane.ca/contest to vote - with the top 12 vote-getters winning a place in our 2023 calendar.

\$1 - 1 vote

Our BigYellowBag® Give & Grow Program fundraiser is back! Use code **GUELPHHS22** when you purchase soil, and not only will YOU save \$5, but they will donate \$10 to GHS. Place your order at www.bigyellowbag.com.

Our Plantables fundraiser is back, too! A hassle-free way to grow healthy fruits and veggies for your family, while also supporting animals in our care! Here's what you do:

1. Go to: www.plantables.ca/for/plant4ghs
2. Choose your garden
3. Enter your fundraising code (PLANT4GHS)

Free shipping on orders of \$50+, and a percentage of all sales gets donated back to GHS. Happy planting!



Summer Critter Camp sells out in record time



After a successful in-person March Break Critter Camp, our Summer Critter Camp registration opened up. Registration opened to the public on Thursday, March 24th - and within three hours camp was sold out for the summer. That's the fastest we've seen it sell out! We can't wait to welcome campers back for nine weeks of animal-themed fun this summer.

Pictured: Peppercorn, one of our Siamese cats, visiting with March Break campers.

Stay tuned to learn about the launch of our new Senior Support program in June!

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