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# the PAW PRESS

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HOPE. CARE. COMPASSION.



# 'Happy Tails Begins Here' GHS Kennel Adoption

**INSPIRED BY A LIFELONG LOVE OF ANIMALS: MARLENA & RALPH BLACKMAN**

Ralph grew up with an abundance of pet companions and a family commitment to his local SPCA. Marlena did not grow up in a family with pets, other than a Budgie, but she always had a great love of animals. When they met and got married, one of the first decisions they made together was about finding a pet companion. They chose to look at their local SPCA in Regina, where they met

and fell in love with a Spaniel/Terrier puppy named Firkin. Firkin became a vital part of their lives for the next 18 years.

Over the years, Marlena and Ralph added Sufi, a Siberian Husky, and later Ariel. "Ariel was not much of a looker when we first met him at five-weeks old in the shelter, but he turned out to be a beautiful Belgian Malinois," shares Ralph. He remembers fondly how the Chicago Police canine unit [the city they lived in at the time] would often cruise by their home to admire him and tease Marlena and Ralph that they would love to "recruit" him to be part of their team.

After the Blackman's moved to Guelph, Ariel died. "We found our way to the Guelph Humane Society (GHS) where Willow, an American Cocker Spaniel, was waiting for us to adopt her. That was 12 years ago and the beginning of our relationship with GHS," shares Marlena.

Later, on an extremely cold February night in 2015, Marlena and Willow were out for their nightly walk. They discovered a freezing cat who was in desperate shape. They brought him to GHS and notified the team that if no one adopted him, they would.

"We were so impressed with the medical care and attention given to the cat, now known as Sage Melchior ("Mel" for short)," shares Marlena. "The updates we received during his recovery and the adoption process motivated us to join the Super Paws Club and become monthly donors."

Then, in 2021 inspired by their GHS pets, the Blackman's made a donation to adopt a 'Happy Tails Begin Here' Kennel and named it in honour of Willow and Sage Melchior. The donation would support animal care at GHS while animals waited for their Happy Tail.

"The experience of walking into a shelter and falling in love with a pet is one I will never forget" said Marlena. "It is meaningful to know our gift will support a place where future families will be built, and similar connections will be made." ♥



## MIKI'S HAPPY TAIL

"I have Feline leukemia virus (FeLV), an infection that can cause cancer and other diseases in cats. Before

my adoption I waited for my Happy Tail for almost 12 months. I thought no one was going to take me home. But...it's been almost a year since I got to go to my furever home where they think I am perfect, just the way I am.

My FeLV has not been active so my Mom and Dad had my last four teeth removed (yup I'm toothless). I am 100% pain free. I love to play with all my toys (especially my hotdog), gallop around the house like a horse,

demolish my scratching posts, sleep in all my favourite spots and spend time looking out all my windows. I even have my own iPad with videos for cats! In exchange for everything my Mom & Dad do for me, I allow them to kiss me over 100 times a day and even let them pick me up and hold me. I also make biscuits for my Mom whenever she sits on the couch and snuggle with my Dad for afternoon naps. I have lots of energy, demand attention and wear out my Mom & Dad with playtime BUT they still think I'm adorable.

I just wanted you all to know that I'm living my best life! Thank you for taking such good care of me and helping me find my furever home."



Love, Miki

Previously 'Michael'



## GHS ADOPTIONS UPDATE

It's been a busy adoption season for the team at GHS. From the beginning of May through to the end of August we **created 341 Happy Tails**, a **7.6% increase** over 2022.

Adoptions include **230 cats** (8 seniors, 125 kittens and 7 barn cats); **45 dogs**; **58 small animals** (including 20 guinea pigs and 9 rabbits); **1 farm animal**; and **7 birds**.

The highlight was when **54 kittens – and the mother of one of the litters** arrived at one time from the Windsor/Essex County Humane Society. GHS is part of a network of humane societies that offer reciprocal support to assist with overpopulation of animals in Southern Ontario.

A big thank you to **PetSmart Charities of Canada** for their **\$40,000 Adoption Prep Grant** to help more cats and kittens find their Happy Tail in 2023! ♥



## It's been a WILD SUMMER

Our Wildlife Program received more than 1,200 calls between May and August this summer. The GHS team assessed and delivered essential short-term shelter and care to more than **55 different species of sick, injured or orphaned wildlife**. The top four intakes included 254 cottontail rabbits, 166 grey squirrels, 124 American robins and 63 Canadian geese. With the help of our volunteer wildlife drivers, we provided safe transportation to our licensed wildlife rehabilitation centre partners for long-term care. Be sure to follow @guelphhumane on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube to catch up on all of the #wildlifewednesday features from this summer. ♥



# SPUD'S STORY



Spud was found alone, lying in the gravel beside the road. Luckily, he was brought to the Guelph Humane Society by a kind stranger—no one came to claim him.

The world can be a scary and dangerous place for a young kitten. At just four-weeks old he was tired, hungry, and dehydrated. He had discharge coming from his nose and eyes that was so severe, he couldn't see or smell. The veterinarian on his case diagnosed him with an Upper Respiratory Infection (URI).

"URI is very common in cats, but the infection can put a young kitten's health at high-risk," says Samantha Westphal, GHS Animal Care Manager. "If left untreated the infection can progress quite quickly, and in fragile young kittens like Spud, it can even lead to death."

Unfortunately, Spud did not respond to his treatment. The infection spread to both of his eyes causing them to rupture.

Spud's infection advanced quickly,

causing him great pain. The only way to give him relief was to remove both of his eyes; he would live his life without sight.

"Kittens living with blindness can have full and wonderful lives," says Westphal. "They adapt quite well to their environment by using other senses such as smell and hearing. We knew this would be the best path forward for our little Spud."

Spud recovered from his surgery in foster care. With slow introductions he became comfortable with other cats and dogs in the home. He learned to rely on his other senses to find and play with his favourite toy and his foster even taught him the word 'touch' before petting him to ensure he would not be startled by human touch.

Thanks to our supporters, Spud received the care he needed. He was adopted in August and is now living his Happy Tail with his new family. ♥



## CUTEST PET PHOTO CONTEST RAISES MORE THAN \$14.5K FOR VULNERABLE PETS

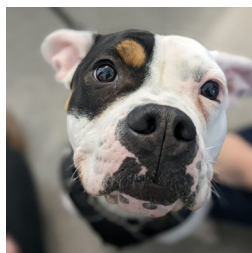
This summer GHS launched its inaugural Cutest Pet Photo Contest. This year's contest raised more than \$14,500 to help Guelph and Wellington animals with nowhere else to turn.

Overall, 108 pets were entered which attracted 19,635 votes from 258 voters. Thank you to everyone who took part!

Congratulations to Leo (photo above), the grand prize winner who took home the title this year with a total of 2,800 votes. Leo received a signature pet photography session with Laura Wombwell Photography, a large unframed print and, of course, celebrity status as the winner of the GHS Cutest Pet Contest of 2023. Leo's photo will be hung in the GHS lobby next year!

Congratulations are also in order for second and third place winners, Rosie, bottom left, (2,785 votes) and Buddy, bottom right (1,530 votes). The runner ups will receive a 30-minute mini pet photography session with Laura Wombwell Photography and one 8x10" print or two 5x7" prints.

See all the photos at <https://www.gogophotocontest.com/guelphhumanesociety> ♥



GHS NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

# KIBBLES & BITS

## NEW STAFF AT GHS

### GHS INTRODUCES NEW DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

Brooke Eby has joined GHS in the role of Director of Development. Brooke has worked in the charitable, non-profit, and private sector, and has 15 years of experience in development, fundraising, events, communications, and marketing. Brooke is passionate about animal welfare and is looking forward to using her talents to help advance GHS's mission.

### GHS WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS TO THE COMMUNITY OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT TEAM

Please join us in welcoming Abigail Heckbert, GHS's new Volunteer and Engagement Coordinator and Kate Glaab, GHS's new Education and Community Programs Coordinator. Abigail is working hard to on-board more than 100 new volunteers to GHS, our largest undertaking to date. Kate brings a fresh perspective to reimagine GHS Kids camps and other education and outreach opportunities.

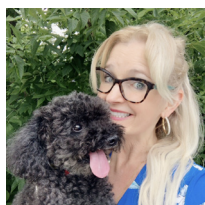
### ENHANCEMENTS MADE TO GHS FARM ANIMAL HOUSING SPACE, THANKS TO THE GRAND RIVER AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY (GRAS)

Thank you to GRAS for its continued grant support to improve the welfare of lost, orphaned, or abandoned farm animals in Guelph and Wellington County. GRAS funding has made improvements to GHS's outdoor enclosure possible with the addition of a roof, which was installed summer 2023, to benefit the experience of farm animals in care.



# NEW FACES AT THE GUELPH HUMANE SOCIETY

## MEET THE NEW DIRECTORS ON OUR BOARD



Tricia Holmes



Samantha Lawson



Heather Mair



Dakota Pitz

On June 13th, GHS held its 129th Annual General Meeting (AGM). At the meeting, members confirmed four new Directors to the GHS Board:

- **Tricia Holmes**, a lawyer practicing in criminal law with a love of animals and concern for animal welfare.
- **Samantha Lawson**, an administrator in the public sector with a strong passion for the natural environment.
- **Heather Mair**, a professor at the University of Waterloo. Her research and teaching are focused in the area of community development through recreation, tourism, and sport.
- **Dakota Pitz**, an active member in the community, and a Realtor dedicated to serving the City of Guelph and its residents.

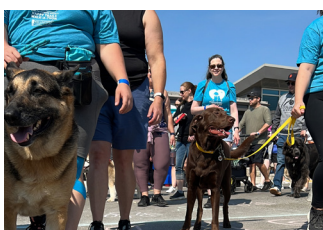
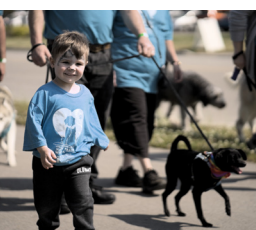
David DiMatteo (Treasurer) and Lena Levison (Member at Large) were also re-elected for their second term.

They join Meaghan Middleton (Chair), Troy Ford (Vice Chair), Michael Irwin (Secretary) and Members at Large Alex Ciccone, Michael Foggia and Jim Pietrangelo.

The board said goodbye to board members Jim Kearns, Earla Smith, Peter Tesche and Gael van Veen.

"In this moment of transition, I want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our outgoing board members for their dedication and years of service to the Guelph Humane Society. Your contributions have been invaluable, and you leave behind a legacy of compassion and commitment," says Meaghan Middleton, GHS Board Chair. "As we say goodbye, we also welcome new members, each bringing their unique expertise and fresh perspectives. Together, we embark on a new chapter, united in our shared mission to make a difference in the lives of animals in our community."♥





We were proud to host our GHS Happy Trails Walk-a-thon on June 4th. The event was proudly presented by Wellington Laboratories Inc. and was the first of its kind held at our 190 Hanlon Creek Blvd. location. More than \$68,000 was raised, \$31,000 by our pet-loving community members and an additional \$36,000 was generously donated in sponsorship by local businesses. "Funds raised will go a long way to supporting care for animals with nowhere else to turn," says Lisa Veit, GHS Executive Director. "It was a true honour to have so many community members come and participate in this event. We look forward to hosting it again next year." ♥

# Guelph Humane Society's Happy Trails Walk-a-thon raised more than \$68,000 to support vulnerable animals in the community

THANK YOU TO OUR  
COMMUNITY AND OUR 2023  
HAPPY TRAILS  
WALK-A-THON SPONSORS

Proudly presented by:



Sponsored in partnership with:



# BECOME A GHS SUPER PAWS MEMBER



& help us provide care for **MORE** animals



\$25/MONTH = A WEEK'S  
WORTH OF FOOD &  
SUPPLIES FOR 2 CATS



\$100/MONTH = A WEEK'S  
WORTH OF FOOD &  
SUPPLIES FOR 4 DOGS

## COMING EVENTS

Visit [guelphhumane.ca](http://guelphhumane.ca) for details.

### OCTOBER 2023

**CAT-TOBER** GHS is accepting cat food and litter donations to support pets throughout the GHS Pet Food Bank for the month of October. Items can be dropped off in our main lobby, email questions to [ghscares@guelphhumane.ca](mailto:ghscares@guelphhumane.ca).

### October 25, 2023 CATS AND THEIR QUIRKS

6:00 pm  
This in-person presentation is made possible with the support of Sleeman Breweries. Speaker: Melissa Stolz, GHS Intake and Behaviour Coordinator. Tickets are \$15, available at [guelphhumane.ca](http://guelphhumane.ca)

### November 4, 2023

#### HAPPY TAILS GALA (SOLD OUT)

Our signature GALA event is returning this Fall to the Delta Hotels Guelph Conference Centre. Proudly presented by Speedy Autoservice Guelph.

### November 18, 2023

#### BOTTLE DRIVE

10:00 am to 4:00 pm  
Save your empties to help support the vulnerable animals in our community! Donate your empty bottles and cans to the Guelph Humane Society. Our volunteers will be accepting all cans, bottles, kegs and wine bags.

## JOIN OUR MAIL LIST

Don't miss out on animal stories, updates, news, events and so much more. To sign up just click **SUBSCRIBE** at the top of our home page at [guelphhumane.ca](http://guelphhumane.ca)



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Charitable Registration  
#119236305RR0001

[guelphhumane.ca](http://guelphhumane.ca)

    @guelphhumane

**SAVE THE DATE:** PetSmart Adoption Event, 183 Silvercreek Pkwy, Guelph (November 6 to 12); GHS Adoption Event (November 24 & 25), GHS Holiday Open House (December 2).