

PAWsitive News

Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society



Winter 2023

NEVER GIVE UP



Mitch was the honorary guest of honor at our 2017 Thanksgiving Feast for the Shelter Pets.

It was a cold day in January 2016 when Mitch arrived at CHHS. He was found wandering as a stray in Tuckasegee and it appeared he had gone without food for several days. We gladly took this sweet hound dog in and gave him safe refuge from the cold. Over time, Mitch was overlooked by potential adopters because first of all, we had (and always have) plenty of hound dogs to choose from, and second, Mitch could be quite stubborn and set in his ways.

Time went on. Weeks turned into months, and months led to years.

And although we loved and doted on our beloved Mitch, we never gave up on finding him a forever home. As we do with all our shelter pets, we threw Mitch birthday parties, gave him his own personalized stocking at Christmas, and we even

made Mitch the honorary dog at our annual Thanksgiving feast.

This spring, after seven amazing years in our compassionate care, Mitch found his perfect human match and the best home a dog could ever hope for. The story of Mitch's adoption "went viral" as the saying goes, and was aired on television news stations across the country and was even featured on the website of People Magazine.

If you ever need a "PAWsitive" reminder not to be discouraged or disillusioned because of unrest and uncertainty, just remember this message directly from Mitch:

"Never Give Up."



This is why we do what we do.



The H.E.A.R.T. of North Carolina
HUMANE. EMERGENCY. ADOPTION. RESCUE. TRANSPORT.



828-743-5752
www.chhumanesociety.org
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Cashiers, NC 28717

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From the President of the Board of Directors

I would like to express my gratitude and say, "Thank You!" for the continued and enthusiastic support of the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society. The local communities of Sapphire, Cashiers and Highlands have enabled us to continue to perform our duties as an essential

Our motto is "Never Give Up".

service to the public and the animals that come under our blanket of care. We continue with our lifesaving work of rescuing, rehabilitating, reuniting and finding new forever

homes for our canine and feline companions. I am grateful for all our volunteers, foster home providers, dog walkers and Hikers for Hounds that help to socialize our furry friends.

Our motto is "Never Give Up". When it comes to finding new forever homes for our furry friends we give them all the time they need to connect with that special someone. We have some excellent candidates for forever companions. However, some take more time than others to be discovered. All of the support provided by this community gives them the extra time needed



CHHS Board President Gary Maddox with wife Linda and CHHS shelter rescue Willie.

to find and experience a loving home.

Here's wishing everyone a happier, healthier and more peaceful year!

Gary Maddox, President
CHHS Board of Directors

Donate Your Vehicle to CHHS



Do you have a gently-used mid-size vehicle taking up space in your garage? The Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society has a critical need for a medium size SUV-type vehicle we can use for daily veterinarian appointments, food pick-ups and supplies errands. We love our large capacity animal transport van, but it is not efficient for our smaller day-to-day trips. Ideally, we would like a vehicle that can comfortably hold 2-4 animal crates, is easy on gas and affordable to maintain.

Donate your car to help homeless animals and receive a charitable tax deduction in the process. You'll be getting rid of a vehicle taking up space in your garage or driveway and avoiding repairs and the headache and hassle of selling a vehicle.

It's a win-woof-wag!

If you have a vehicle that can help us help the animals, please email david@chhumanesociety.org or call (828)743-5750.

Double Your Donation!

The 2023 Year-End \$50,000 Matching Gift Challenge

2023 has been a challenging year for animal shelters nationwide. The Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society is no exception. While we have found as many forever homes as possible, the intake of local strays and owner-surrendered pets has been at an all-time high, and we have operated at full- or over-capacity since the beginning of the year. Compounding these challenges is that the food expense to ensure all our shelter pets have full, happy tummies has increased 109% this year, and our veterinary and pharmaceutical costs have nearly doubled as well.

Thanks to a generous long-term supporter of CHHS, your tax-deductible year-end donation can be doubled! If we can raise \$25,000 in much-needed funds prior to December 31st, this kind and compassionate supporter will match each donation dollar-for-dollar, for a total of \$50,000 to help us care for the more than 120 animals currently at our no-kill shelter.

To help us continue to be a voice for the voiceless, please consider a generous gift to support our lifesaving work. Checks can be made payable to CHHS and mailed to P.O. Box 638, Cashiers, NC 28717. You may also call (828)743-5769 and charge your donation over the phone, or visit our website at chhumanesociety.org, click on the red "Donate" button at the top right of our home page, and make your donation online.

Please take this opportunity to double your donation and double the number of animals we can rescue, care for, and adopt. Thank you for your kindness and support!

37 YEARS OF SAVING LIVES AND FINDING FOREVER HOMES!



CASHIERS HIGHLANDS HUMANE SOCIETY

www.chhumanesociety.org • 828-743-5752 • 200 Gable Drive, Sapphire, NC 28774

SAVE THE DATES!

For the first time in five years, we will be back at the beautiful and newly-remodeled Country Club of Sapphire Valley with a grand gala to support the CHHS shelter pets! And then later in the year we will debut an exciting and all-new casino night "fun-raiser" at our first-ever event at Highlands Country Club!

GALA FOR THE CHHS SHELTER PETS

DATE: MONDAY, JUNE 17, 2024

LOCATION: THE COUNTRY CLUB OF SAPPHIRE VALLEY



CASINO NIGHT FOR THE CHHS SHELTER PETS

DATE: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2024

LOCATION: HIGHLANDS COUNTRY CLUB



So mark your calendars and save the dates for two great events to support the animals at our no-kill shelter. For more information, please email info@chhumanesociety.org

Happy 10th Anniversary Jodi!



*CHHS Assistant Manager Jodi Henkel
with Silas and Abby*

December 10, 2013 was a great day for the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society, because that's the day Jodi Henkel started as a kennel technician. Celebrating her 10th anniversary with CHHS this year, Jodi is now our Assistant Manager. She is also founder and director of our immensely popular Critter Camp program.

As a lifelong animal advocate, Jodi joined our team as she was beginning her junior year at Western Carolina University. We immediately realized what a compassionate and dedicated professional Jodi was, and we were happy to work around her demanding college schedule. Upon graduation in 2015, Jodi joined Team CHHS full-time. As Assistant Manager, Jodi is responsible for scheduling and supervising the Animal Care Specialists on our staff who take care of an average of 120 animals on a daily basis. But as in any workplace, there are illnesses and planned days off, and Jodi never hesitates to fill in to help feed the shelter pets, administer medicines and preventatives, answer phones, and transport animals on our weekly "vet runs" for routine and urgent care.

Jodi is oftentimes the first point of contact for our multiple community outreach programs and to help initiate new volunteers. Speaking of community outreach, Jodi envisioned, developed and directed something in 2019 that was literally life-changing for the children in our community.

Jodi created Critter Camp. For the past four years under Jodi's leadership, elementary school-age children have experienced a week-long summer day camp at CHHS to learn about responsible pet ownership, humane education, first-hand interaction with animals of multiple species and the

endangered habitat that we all share. Jodi has a dream that someday, with more resources, Critter Camp can be all summer long and expanded to more age groups.

"Teaching children and seeing their enthusiasm for learning about animals is incredibly rewarding," says Jodi. "And just as rewarding to me is our rescue work where we first find animals at their very worst, and then we find for them the very best of happy endings."

There have been many other rewarding moments, too. Like serving on the front lines of puppy mill raids and hoarding cases. And being the primary caregiver for animals like Mizuno, a tiny abandoned kitten bottle-fed by Jodi who became the unofficial mascot for the Blue Ridge high school volleyball team, traveling to all the games, the practices, and even on all the bus rides. And of course there is Abby, who Jodi adopted from CHHS in 2019 and as she lovingly describes as "the best kind of dog, a mutt of all mutts".

Rewarding moments would not be complete without mentioning Silas, Jodi's first child, born in 2021. Bringing a child into this world is challenging enough, without the joyous event happening in the midst of the health care crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"CHHS was very supportive while I was out on maternity leave," says Jodi. "And when I came back, I realized that CHHS is also a great place to work while raising a child. We're not co-workers here, we're family. We are a work family that cares about each other's personal family."

Ten years. Jodi is the second member of our management team to celebrate a 10th anniversary at CHHS. Two more team members will celebrate their 10th in 2024. That speaks volumes to the strength and stability of the organization dedicated to serving as the voice for the voiceless on the Highlands-Cashiers plateau.

"I can't help but be excited for the next decade at CHHS," says Jodi. "I have seen so much positive growth and change in the past 10 years that it's going to be hard to top. But I know with the best team here at CHHS and the most caring animal loving community behind us, we will continue to do wonderful things!"

CHHS Supports Our Local Law Enforcement K-9's

In 2022, we helped raise the funds for Jackson County Sheriff's K-9 Officer Scout, who needed a new "retirement doghouse". We love Scout, who for years was a star attraction at our summer Critter Camp program.

This year, we helped another recently retired Jackson County Sheriff's K-9, not with his house... but with his life.

Axe retired this past January. Many times in his career, this K9 Deputy specializing in drug detection alerted officers to major narcotics seizures, removing bad guys from our streets and making our neighborhoods safer.

Axe was more than just a trained law enforcement officer protecting our community. He was, and is, a beloved member of the family of Investigator Ridge Parris.

Ridge contacted CHHS and shared an urgent heartbreaking situation. Axe was at the emergency veterinary hospital. He hadn't eaten for days and had lost a tremendous amount of weight. An ultrasound showed a significant intestinal blockage, and immediate surgery was needed to save this heroic dog's life. Unfortunately, all the emergency medical funds from the Jackson County Sheriff's Office, as well as from the Parris family themselves, had been exhausted.

Without the surgery, the hospital suggested euthanasia as the only option.

But that wasn't an option to CHHS.

Within minutes of getting the plea for help from Investigator Parris, the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society gave the green light for the surgery and paid 100% of the bill. Axe completely recovered and is now back to normal as a beloved family member and a respected retired law enforcement officer.



Stuff the Stockings

'Tis the season for our 7th annual "Stuff the Stockings" for the more than 120 animals currently in our care! Each CHHS shelter pet has a personalized stocking and we are hoping to fill them with food, toys, treats and supplies including: crunchy dog treats, bully sticks and Busy Bones; cat treats; canned food and dry kibble (Purina dog chow, cat chow, puppy and kitten chow); stuffed toys and durable toys for dogs such as Kongs; interactive toys for cats and kittens; pet supplies including leashes, collars, Sporn harnesses, slow feeder bowls, cat scratching posts, dog and cat beds, and small fleece blankets.



Stuff the Stockings presents can be purchased and/or dropped off at local participating sponsors (Woof Gang Bakery, Paws on the Mountain, Cashiers Valley Pharmacy, Highlands Hiker, Animal Wellness Hospital of Highlands, and Highlands Mountain Paws), brought to the shelter or shipped via UPS or FedEx to: CHHS, 200 Gable Drive, Sapphire, NC 28774. Stuff the Stockings goodies can also be found and shipped from our online wish lists at Chewy.com and Amazon.com. Thank you for making this holiday season extra-special for the CHHS shelter pets!



CHHS Board President Gary Maddox, Executive Director David Stroud, and CHHS shelter dog Apollo stand at the site prior to construction of the new volunteer dog walking trail. The CHHS Canine Adoption Center, Feline Adoption Center and Puppy Pavilion can be seen in the background.

New Volunteer Dog Walking Trail

For decades, our beloved dog walking volunteers have visited CHHS to give our shelter pups an extra opportunity for exercise and socialization. The most common walking route used was down our main entrance road, then across Highway 64 East to the gravel road that wended its way to the Sapphire Valley Resort. In recent years, our summer Critter Campers have also used this route during their Friday “graduation hikes”.

A pedestrian crossing Highway 64 with a leashed dog in tow has become more and more treacherous over the years, especially from motorists traveling westward around the blind curve from Lonesome Valley. We had an idea to solve this challenge, and at the same time utilize the pristine natural resources on our campus in a responsible, sustainable way.

This past winter our awesome dog walking volunteer Kim Allen initiated discussions with our great neighbors, the Friends of Panthertown Valley. The Panthertown folks lent us their expertise and helped map out a trail on the northwest section of our property. It was a perfect solution that provides a safe and beautiful environment to hike for our community volunteers and our shelter dogs.

In September ground was broken on the new volunteer dog walking trail and opened soon thereafter. The first phase of the trail is an approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ mile loop, and a volunteer can walk a shelter dog around the loop in about 10-15 minutes. Additional spurs are envisioned for future phases, along with a peaceful and serene resting area with a “rainbow bridge” theme. Over the winter and spring we will be adding signage, a water station, dog waste station and some benches. An official grand opening of the new trail will take place in Summer 2024.

From the Executive Director

I will never forget the look on that car salesman's face in Fort Myers. His name was Louis. He was a really nice guy. He had sold me a Mustang convertible once before.

That Mustang was a lot of fun. Kodi, my "heart dog" Husky, was happy to ride in that little back seat, as long as the top was down. Hemi, the baby of the Husky pack, always insisted on riding shotgun.

And then came Max.

I went back to Louis, and I said I wanted some kind of big ol' school bus SUV. I wasn't picky.

He had a used 2005 Yukon XL on the lot. "It's got three rows of seats!" he exclaimed.

"Can they be removed?" I asked.

Blank stare.

"The back row seat can," Louis said, after regaining his car salesman composure.

"Great, let's remove it. How about the middle seats?" I responded.

Blank stare.

After another awkward pause, Louis said: "They can't be removed but they can fold down."

"Great, let's fold them down," I said.

And thus, the Huskymobile was born. The only GMC Yukon XL that has just two seats for human passengers.

The Huskymobile brought my boys and me to our forever home at the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society in the spring of 2012. Over the years,

the Huskies have not only enjoyed adventures all across the plateau, the vehicle that brought them here has also been called into service to assist in CHHS animal rescue, most recently last year in South Carolina.

And sometimes the Huskymobile has also been where we said goodbye. When we didn't want to move him off the stretcher, Dr. Emily crawled into the back of the Huskymobile one Saturday afternoon to help me say goodbye to Grandpa Jones.

After all my senior Huskies forged a path ahead of me to the Rainbow Bridge over the years, last year after much thought, and not just a small amount of well-meaning coercion from loved ones, I decided to adopt who I referred to as my "bucket list Husky puppy". Just one more Husky, I rationalized with my inner self, before I kick the bucket. And maybe this time, for the first time, a Husky with no "story", no issues, just a normal puppy, I thought.

I truly believe that is when God laughs.

Her name is Oakley. My husky puppy (the offspring of a puppy mill survivor) developed cataracts and was blind by the age of 11 months. Yes, a puppy can get cataracts. The last few months have been difficult. Oakley and I have been putting a lot of miles on the Huskymobile going to Upstate Vet. Last month was surgery day. On the drive down to Greenville I thought of this quote from the Shawshank Redemption.

"I find I'm so excited that I can barely sit still or hold a thought in my head. I think it's the excitement only a free man can feel. A free man at a start of a long journey whose conclusion is uncertain."



Change the word "man" to "dog" and I wondered if that is what Oakley felt.

I think of all the lifesaving and life-changing trips the Huskymobile has ever made, but I believe this journey Oakley and I made together was the greatest one yet. The surgery was successful.

Oakley can see.

So just as Mitch taught us earlier this year, and Oakley reminded me most recently, these three words have been a guiding principle throughout a very challenging 2023:

"Never Give Up."

David Stroud, Executive Director
Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society



The H.E.A.R.T. of North Carolina
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PAWsitive News

Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society



Your destination for unconditional love!



One of the most picturesque no-kill shelters in the United States, the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society is nestled amongst ten rolling acres in the Blue Ridge Mountains, surrounded by the natural beauty of scenic forests, mountains and rivers. Dogs romp and run in multi-acre play yards, and felines interact and play in cageless community cat rooms. Since 1987, CHHS has rescued, cared for, and found forever homes for thousands of abandoned and neglected animals.

Visit the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society today
– it's your destination for unconditional love!

ADOPT 🐾 VOLUNTEER 🐾 DONATE



www.chhumanesociety.org

(828) 743-5752

200 Gable Drive, Sapphire NC 28774

Established in 1987, Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society is a private 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit animal welfare organization and no-kill shelter. We receive no federal, state, or county tax dollars, and no funding from any national animal welfare organization. CHHS relies solely on donations, grants, bequests and special events to further our mission of rescue, compassionate care, and finding forever homes for abandoned and neglected animals.