



# Brief Paws



## This Year's Kitten Season Has Plenty of Purrs!

- Make Dog Walks Fun Again
- Bowser's Boo Bash Returns



Moving? Send us an email at  
development@whs4pets.org

**Willamette Humane Society**  
PO Box 13005, Salem, OR 97309  
503-585-5900  
whs4pets.org  
info@whs4pets.org

Due to COVID-19, shelter services  
are by appointment only. Visit  
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**WHS Spay & Neuter Clinic**  
Phone: 503-480-SPAY  
Online at whs4pets.org/clinic

**WHS Thrift Store**  
548 High St. NE in downtown Salem  
Phone: 503-362-6892  
Online at whs4pets.org/thriftstore

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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

BJ Andersen, CAWA, Executive Director



One of my favorite things about my job is getting to share inspiring stories with you. In this issue, for example, we share four stories of kittens that entered our shelter this season. Each one involves a tiny creature in need of help, a community willing to give it, and a happy ending that follows. But these tales represent only the middle of a rescue pet's story.

And at Willamette Humane Society, we want to remember the beginning of an animal's story too.

The dogs and cats we care for in the shelter come to us because humans made a choice. Often, those choices are complex, difficult, and full of grief. These

animals move on to happy endings. But we want to respect and honor the beginning of the story, which is often painful for the humans.

During the past two years, our community has been through an incredible series of difficulties. We've moved through a pandemic, an economic roller coaster, staggering unemployment, fires, ice storms, record-breaking heat, and more. Any or all of these things can break the bond between a human and a beloved pet.

Animal shelters, ours included, are changing. We're looking for new ways to support and honor the bond between pets and people, and sometimes, we find our old models aren't working anymore. Instead of just focusing on surrender and adoption, we are looking at how we can use our resources to preserve the family bond and keep pets with the people who love them. In the coming months, we hope to share more stories with you about how we're doing just that.

We encourage you to join us as we examine our assumptions and work to build a more compassionate community. It's so easy to make a snap judgment about an animal in the shelter.

We tell ourselves we'd never surrender a pet. We say we'd always make plans for our pets in case we're not there to help. We talk about how our pets are family members that we'd never leave.

But before we leave that snarky social media comment or mutter that unkind statement, I invite us all to think about the last two years. Sometimes, people in our community break under the pressure. It's our responsibility, as loving humans, to help and support those around us.

Thank you for being part of Willamette Humane Society. Your support empowers us to maintain the human-animal bond wherever it is found. And your compassion makes the world a better place, both for pets and for the people that love them.

I'm glad to be on this journey with you!

# Meet a Local Donor, Volunteer, Advocate

Sherri Partridge, Community Philanthropy Officer

Susan Fletcher had no idea that it would quickly become her passion when she and her 12-year-old granddaughter started volunteering at Willamette Humane Society.

But eight years and 2,220 volunteer hours later, she can't imagine her life without being a champion for shelter animals. Susan has befriended dogs and cats in so many ways, including most recently, fostering kittens.

"I'm lucky to have been given the opportunity over the years to volunteer in a number of areas at the shelter, including dog handling, cat hospitality, playgroup assistant, transport team and adoptions," said Susan.

Now she can add fostering to the list.

"I've had four or five litters of unsocialized kittens," said Susan. "The first litter was five kittens, and I thought 'What have I done,' but I received a lot of support from shelter foster staff."

Susan had no experience with kittens in her home but has learned so much that she is now a mentor, helping to support other new foster volunteers.

"It's very rewarding work ... I go into it with the attitude that when I return the kittens to the shelter, I've helped make them more adoptable, and then I can take in more fosters."

In addition to her volunteer work, Susan feels it's important to support the shelter financially.

"The staff and variety of services it takes to care for all the animals wouldn't be possible without donor support."

Susan is also grateful that her financial gifts help make Willamette Humane Society an affordable resource for people to turn to when they don't have any other options.

"Reading and learning all of the success stories about sick, injured, or afraid animals that come to the shelter, and the staff and volunteers who treat them with no judgement and work hard to find them a home, makes me proud to be both a donor and volunteer."

**Susan Fletcher  
poses with  
kitten, Jello.**



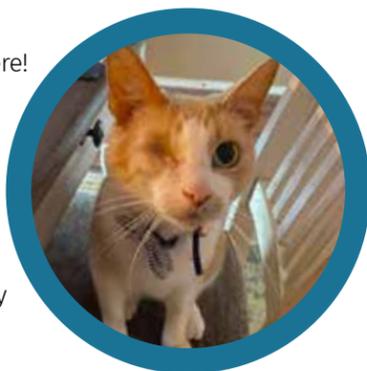
Photo by Martha Russell

# Happy TAILS

WHS ADOPTION STORIES

## Frank

“Frank seems to really like it here! He loves to lay in my lap or just sleep or play on his scratching post. He seems to be getting along with my dogs and the rest of my family. We’re super happy to have him. His favorite place to lay is on my legs while I sleep.”



## Lincoln (now Stanley)

“Just wanted to give you a quick update on Lincoln, who now goes by Stanley. He has been a real pleasure. We’re at the two-week mark, and he has settled into our household just fine. He and our older dog are great buddies since they both like that rough play. Lots of tug of war with those two!

We’re signed up for a basic manners class ... so we’re looking forward to learning some new things. However, Stanley has been such a good boy that the class will just be the icing on the cake. He sleeps great all night outside his crate, has been perfectly potty trained, and really tries hard to do his best. Even the cats are starting to get used to him. He did have a bit of resistance at the vet’s office, but they worked through it. We know it was just because he was afraid and we couldn’t go in with him.

Stanley is a HUGE hit at the dog park where we go every day. He plays with everybody, and ‘catch me if you can’ is his favorite game! That really helps manage all that puppy energy. He also has been on a number of hikes with Craig at Smith Rock State Park. He’s a perfect little gentleman when he meets other hikers and dogs.

I just wanted to let you know he’s a happy boy, and we’re nuts about him! Thank you all SO much! We feel very, very grateful to have Stanley in our family!”



## A Happy, Furry Family

“Thought you would like to have a picture of our happy rescue family. The three cats, Lily, Max, and Sammy, were only six months old when we adopted them. They are now seven years old. Benny, our white dog on the couch, is now 11. We got him when he was seven ... Pebbles is almost nine. We’ve had her now for three years.

They all bring so much joy to our lives. We are squeezed into a 1,000-square-foot house. We would have more if we had room, but for now, this is it.

Keep up the good work saving these precious animals.”



## Lila

“We adopted our little tabby Lila as a kitten in November 2020. She and her siblings were in the loving care of one of Willamette Humane Society’s devoted foster volunteers. She is such a joy and has become a lively addition to our home with her little, creaky meow, wide eyes, and kitten antics. Lila is also a fun playmate and snuggle buddy to our four-year-old, Jenna, a 2018 WHS adoption.

We are so grateful for all of the hard work and care that the WHS staff and volunteers provide for the animals and for the outreach and education provided to the community.”



# Petcetera

WHAT’S GOING ON AT  
WILLAMETTE HUMANE SOCIETY

## The Holiday Bazaar Returns!

On November 12 and 13, the WHS Thrift Store will be transformed into a winter wonderland filled with amazing finds. Staff and volunteers will be ready to ring up purchases between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Savvy Salem shoppers stand in line in front of the shop on the opening day of the bazaar, hoping to spot the secret treasures before anyone else does. But here’s a secret. We store Holiday Bazaar finds all year round, and there are far too many to put out on the first day. (In years past, we have had over 300 containers in storage!) No matter when you shop, you’re bound to find something amazing.

The Holiday Bazaar has been part of the Thrift Store since it opened in 1968, and it brings in extra revenue for shelter pets and the people that love them.

Come in and shop at the Bazaar at 548 High Street in Salem! Many thanks, and we look forward to seeing you.

## National Adoption Week is a Success

During National Adoption Week in July, WHS staff brought adoptable cats and kittens to Meow Town, our offsite adoption center located within Salem’s PetSmart. Every day, families came streaming in to take home a new furry family member.

Young kittens dominated the event. July is right in the middle of kitten season, and so many little ones were ready to leave their foster homes and join families. But older cats made the trip to Meow Town too. In fact, Marbles, a 13-year-old kitty with chronic kidney disease, found a loving home during the event too.

We’re so thankful for the Meow Town space within PetSmart. And we’re grateful for all of the families that took home a furry friend.

## Bowser’s Boo Bash: Creepy Cauldrons Presented by Capitol Subaru

At this year’s Bowser’s Boo Bash: Creepy Cauldrons, we’ve brewed up some spook-tacular ways for you to help animals in your community.

Shop to help the pets in our online auction, where you can bid from the comfort of your couch—or even on the go, with text alerts! With everything from gift certificates to gift baskets, dog toys to quilts, there’s something for everyone. And each purchase goes back to your community, helping dogs, cats, and the people who love them.

Want to party in person? Grab your broomsticks and join us on Saturday, October 23, at 6 p.m. at the Willamette Heritage Center for the intimate in-person event! Ticket sales are limited.

Thank you to all the businesses and people who support Bowser’s Boo Bash by donating auction items, sponsoring, and shopping to help the pets.

Visit [bit.ly/bowers21](https://bit.ly/bowers21) for more information.





Photos and Text by Jean Dion,  
Communications Manager

# Four Stories from Kitten Season

The 2021 kitten season kicked off in March, and as we prepared this publication for printing, the cats kept coming. Each kitten is exceptional and unique, and they all have stories to tell about the community that helped them survive. These are just four stories we pulled from this year's crew.

## Momma Mona Lisa

In April, a beautiful orange tabby cat came into the shelter with her three flame-point kittens. We called her Mona Lisa, and we asked an experienced foster volunteer to watch over this little family.

We know everyone loves tiny kittens, especially when they have creamy fur and blue eyes. But there was something truly special about Mona Lisa. As soon as we shared a photo of Mona and her kittens on social media, someone in our community fell in love.

This social media fan scoured our Adoptable Cats page every day, waiting for the moment when Mona would appear. And one day, it happened! Mona was available for adoption at Meow Town, our offsite adoption center in PetSmart. Her number one fan hopped in the car that day to adopt her. And they've already sent us an update, saying Mona is a playful and wonderful addition to their home.



## Shy Betty

Beautiful kitten Betty came to the shelter when she was about 12 weeks old. She and her three siblings had been born outside, and they were living beneath a tent in a Salem neighborhood. The family that found her provided plenty of food and water. But Betty and her siblings were nervous and undersocialized.

The kittens went to a foster home, where they met friendly cats, a dog, and plenty of new people. The little crew worried, and they sometimes hissed and spat. But her foster family did the hard work to help her. And that paid off.

Betty and her siblings were adopted as part of National Adoption Week at PetSmart in July.

## KITTEN SEASON CONTINUES

Cold weather tends to slow or stop the influx of kittens. But kitten season never really stops. We must prepare to fill those little bellies with nutritious food so they can grow big and strong. We have an Amazon wish list filled to the brim with items for kittens.

See it at [whs4pets.org/shop-to-help-the-kittens](https://whs4pets.org/shop-to-help-the-kittens).  
Financial donations are also appreciated.

*Thank you!*

## Adorable Pipsqueak

What happens when your cat goes into heat, and your cat's spay surgery appointment is weeks away? That happened to a family, and their cat got out and got pregnant. This family decided to help their cat through the pregnancy and delivery, and Pipsqueak was one of the kittens.

This family had dogs, children, and other cats. It was a perfect socialization environment for Pipsqueak and her six kitten siblings. When they were old enough for adoption, they came to the shelter and impressed our staff with their calm, gentle ways. They posed beautifully for the camera, played with toys like champs, and never shied away from meeting new people.

All of these kittens, including Pipsqueak, found homes in June.



## Playful Tom

Tiny tuxedo Tom came to the shelter in April with four of his siblings. While he was vocal and friendly, he was also very sick. His eyes were red and sore due to an infection, and his fur fell out in clumps due to ringworm.

A dedicated foster family took on this challenge. They medicated Tom's eyes, and they gave him multiple ringworm treatments to eradicate the infection. He stayed with that foster family for more than a month. Then, Tom was healthy, and he was adopted very quickly.

Unfortunately, Tom is also a rowdy kitten, and his new sibling was an older cat. Tom wasn't ready to modify his play style to suit his new sibling, and his adopters realized they just weren't the right family for this zippy kitten.

So Tom came back to the shelter for a second chance. He didn't have to wait long. In just a few days, he was chosen by a home looking for a kitten just like him.

# EVERYONE CAN HELP LOST CATS

*Close to 20 percent of all families that have cats will lose them at least once. The cats see an open door and dash through, they scoot through a loose window screen during fireworks season, or they take an extra-long walk and forget how to get back home. No matter the reason, a cat like this can change from a beloved family member to a stray in mere minutes.*

*Researchers say that cats like this that enter the shelter rarely see their families again. In fact, less than 10 percent of them are reunited.*

*You can help.*

*The best way to help a healthy cat you find outside is to support it and reconnect it with its family (just as you'd want your neighbors to help your cat if it was outside). That means using social media to highlight the cat you've found, reporting the found cat on our website, and posting flyers around the neighborhood.*

*If you find a healthy cat in a safe space, we'd like you to look for its family for two weeks before bringing it to the shelter. If the cat is injured or unsafe, we'll always take it in.*

*We've written up a detailed blog post filled with tips and resources you can use while you search for the cat's family. See it at [whs4pets.org/stray-cats](https://whs4pets.org/stray-cats).*

# Your Three-Step Leash Walking Plan

Dogs straining on their leashes and pulling their owners across the neighborhood terrain is a common challenge. Thankfully, it's a challenge you can face! With a few common-sense steps, you can help build better behaviors for your dog on the go.



A front-clip harness can give you more control and less pulling.

## Step 1 Prepare for Your Walk

Allow your dog some rigorous play in your backyard and a brief time to settle again before you both head out for your walk.

## Step 2 Pick the Right Equipment

Choosing appropriate walking gear can make for less stressful outings with your canine friend.

Consider these tools:

- A front-clip harness with a ring at your dog's chest to attach the leash (photo at left). When your dog pulls on the leash in a front-clip harness, the tension tends to bring your dog toward you. If the harness pulls a bit to the side, clipping the harness ring to the collar with a carabiner will give a bit more stability.
- Head halters. If your dog is gradually desensitized and acclimated to wearing one, a head halter can humanely and effectively manage large, energetic dogs on walks.
- Shorter leashes. A round or flat four- to six-foot leash allows your dog freedom to move away from your side when appropriate while allowing you ease in adjusting the leash length.

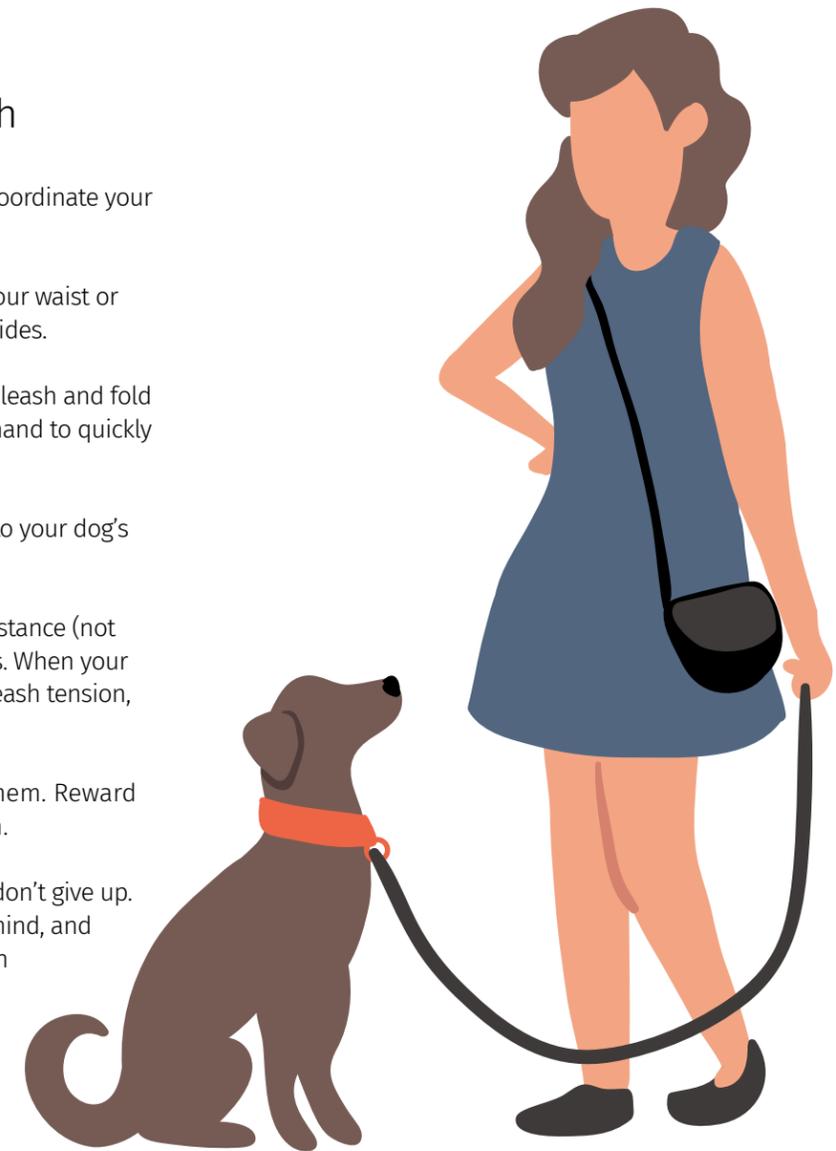
If your dog pulls, avoid back-clip harnesses, flat collars, and martingale collars. None of these tools are helpful in stopping the pulling impulse. Similarly, choke, prong, and electric collars can increase fear and reactivity and wear down your dog's willingness to work with you while walking.

## Step 3 Communicate with the Leash

Good leash skills help you and your dog to coordinate your walks as a team. Consider this approach:

- Hold the leash with both hands held at your waist or stomach with your arms relaxed at your sides.
- Slide the hand nearest the dog down the leash and fold the extra leash in pleats with your other hand to quickly adjust your leash length.
- Ensure that the end of the leash clipped to your dog's gear is loose when your dog isn't pulling.
- Communicate with steady and gentle resistance (not jerking and popping) when your dog pulls. When your dog moves toward you and loosens the leash tension, allow your dog to move forward again.
- Dogs perform the behaviors that pay them. Reward your dog when it isn't pulling the leash.

If you don't enjoy your walks with your dog, don't give up. A good walk exercises your dog's body and mind, and often, dogs and humans that walk strengthen their bonds too.



## TAKE A CLASS

### Life Skills Training for Dogs

You've tried all the tips we outlined, and your dog still pulls you down the block and across the road. What should you do next?

Never underestimate the help a dog trainer can provide.

Think of a trainer as a helpful outsider who can watch what you're doing now, how your dog reacts, and how you work as a team. With that information, your trainer can develop suggestions you can put to use right now to improve your relationship with your furry friend.

At WHS, we offer a three-course Life Skills series made just for dogs that need to brush up on their communication skills:

**LIFE SKILLS 1: Basic Smart Start.** Practice sit, down, come, pay attention, and wait. Understand how to react when your dog pulls on the leash.

**LIFE SKILLS 2: Next Smart Start.** Learn even more about developing recall, stay, and default sits. Practice moving away from distraction. Hone leash-walking skills too.

**LIFE SKILLS 3: Public Smart Start.** Take your lessons on the road and practice in dog-friendly locations around Salem.

Take one class or all three. It's up to you! Find out more and sign up online at [whs4pets.org/train](http://whs4pets.org/train).



## People Memorials

**Elizabeth Adams**  
Irene Longaker and Jon Colburn

**Ruth Adams**  
Barbara Adams  
Linda and David Roberts

**Mary Atkinson**  
William Atkinson

**Steven G. Betschart**  
Karen Betschart  
Michele Fast

**Norman Beugli**  
Lorraine Beugli

**Anthony Boesen**  
Jill Rizk

**Yvonne Boline**  
Barbara Adams

**Ross Carstensen**  
Yvonne Carstensen

**Cairn Clancy**  
Nancy Atkins Hill

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Peter Lawrence

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Beverly Kropp

**Bill and Kimberly Day**  
John Day

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BJ Andersen and Teresa McKenzie

**BJ Andersen**  
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**Linda Baker**  
Christine Vaught

**A Special Cat**  
Kari C.

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Sherri and Lindsay Partridge

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Margo Hampton

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Amber Fowler

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Bryce and Callie Fowler

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Marla and Brian Briggs

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Monte and Barbara Turner

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Laurel Sammer

**WHS Volunteers and Staff**  
Sherri and Lindsay Partridge

**Winnie**  
Sandra Harris

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Michael and Lois Sullivan

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Scherie Hansen-Nielsen

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Maureen Fish

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**Fritz**  
Cheryl Seleen

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Gene Miller

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**Thor**  
Jean Christian

**Tinkie**  
Linda Martini

**Tucker**  
Lucia and Paul Norris

**Twinkle and Scooter**  
Dwight and Judy Courtney

Willamette Humane Society

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## About Our Cover Model!

Ruby is an eight-and-a-half-year-old Soft-Coated Wheaten Terrier who is a puppy mill survivor. She was adopted in April 2014 from a rescue in Kansas City, MO, that had purchased her from a dog auction. She was thin, matted, had a raging ear infection, an injured leg, and was in heat.

Despite her previous circumstances, Ruby is a sweet, smart girl who loves to play with other dogs, especially her adoptive brother, Tate. Because of her injury, her left back leg is an inch shorter than the other one. Even so, Ruby runs like the wind and always has a huge grin on her face when zooming across the yard. She is a delight and a much-loved member of the family.

Ruby lives with Kate Hager (member of our Board of Directors) and Michael Carney.

*Photo by Martha Russell*