

GBHS SUMMER NEWSLETTER

START THE SUMMER OFF

Kind



GREATER BIRMINGHAM
HUMANE SOCIETY

A LETTER FROM OUR CEO

As brutal summer months approach, I am most thankful for you!

128. That number is one that all of us will remember for a long time. Last summer GBHS broke a 135-year record, on a single day, 128 animals were brought in to the shelter. That's about 18 animals coming in for every hour we were open that day.

Summer is here and once again shelters across Alabama will prepare for the best and brace for the worst. The kitten and puppy intake will surge as the mating season peaks. Concerned citizens will call every day to report dogs without water or adequate shelter. Pets will be left in cars. Fireworks will cause pets to scatter, ending up at GBHS. And then there's the possibility of hurricanes.

Because of you, GBHS is the only organization in the community that accepts every animal. These dogs, cats, rabbits, birds, reptiles, and pigs come from all kinds of backgrounds. Pets are brought in by Good Samaritans, the Police, Animal Control Officers, and sadly -- their owners. We serve them regardless of breed, condition, health, age, or history. But like any open admission shelter, our live release rate is dramatically affected by the size of our facilities, the number of animals brought in on any given day and the amount of money we are able to raise daily.

Your support of these animals is what makes the critical difference during these brutal summer months.

Our goal each and every day is the adoption, reclaim or placement of every healthy and treatable animal possible. With your help, we have increased our live release rate over the last three years. However, these strategies alone will not solve the epidemic of homeless animals living and reproducing in our community. GBHS continues to try new programs that address the root causes that drive these numbers.

Your summer gifts:

- Enable us to target the primary source of our stray population, by offering free spay/neuter and vet care for low-income pet owners.
- Provide 24/7 response and pick up for severely injured or abused animals who need immediate emergency care.
- Help us keep families and pets together by providing surrender prevention programs like pet food pantries, pet supplies, and affordable microchip, vaccines and flea/tick treatments.
- Allow us to offer at-cost vet care and spay/neuter surgeries to our rescue partners, which in turn expands the number of animals they can rescue and rehome.

We just cannot do this without you.

I know summer is a busy time for families. Please help us protect these innocent creatures at a time when they need us most, and remember GBHS with your giving and your prayers. No gift is too small, and we never have enough pet food, dog/cat houses, towels, newspapers, non-clumping litter or walkers or fosters.

God bless and thank you for your continued love of our community's animals.



Thank you,

Allison

Allison Black Cornelius

THE KINDNESS CHALLENGE



JUNE 21-23

START YOUR SUMMER OFF KIND BY JOINING US ON A NEW CHALLENGE!

Starting on the first day of summer, June 21st, we Challenge You to Join Us in our first online giving campaign and clear the shelter event. As we kick off our busiest season, we need your help in raising funds and helping us adopt out 200 animals in a one day special adoption event.

GIVING

ONLINE KINDNESS CHALLENGE

Join us at gbhs.everydayhero.do

CHALLENGE DETAILS

Create a page for yourself, your family, or your company, and the winner will be recognized for the rest of the summer as our "Summer Kindness Hero," with recognition in our Adoption Center as well as on our website and featured on social media.

GOAL: \$50,000

DOING

COMMUNITY KINDNESS CHALLENGE

CHALLENGE DETAILS

We want to showcase some of the fantastic things that YOU DO to help us care for the animals. Join us on the Challenge by creating your own fundraiser on behalf of the animals.

Lemonade Stands | Bake Sales
Car/Dog Washes | Supply Drives
Yard Sales | Walk Dogs

Whatever you DO, let us know. Bring in your donations and we'll snap a photo for our Kindness Wall. Visit our website for flyers and more ideas!

GOAL: 25 PARTNERS

ADOPTING

CLEAR THE SHELTER ADOPTION EVENT

SAT | JUNE 23

CHALLENGE DETAILS

Help us adopt out 200 + animals and clear the shelter to make room for the summer flood of surrenders and strays. Adoptions will be offered at the reduced rate of \$21.

GOAL: 200+ ADOPTED

Differences Don't Matter When You Need a Friend



When animals are abandoned at our shelter, we usually know very little about them. Upon arriving at GBHS this spring, Jenna, a dog, and Gloria, a cat, went their separate ways. Not all dogs and cats get along, so it's rare for a dog and cat to co-mingle during their time in our care.

Some animals do just fine in a shelter environment, but Jenna did not. Cowering in her kennel, she would resist walks. Worse, she would lie on her dog bed and withdraw when potential adopters tried to get her attention. But then adoption counselor, Stephanie Aguirre, had an idea.

Stephanie recalled that Jenna was surrendered with another pet, so she brought Gloria into the adoption room to meet Jenna, and everything changed!

It is noble to love another without caring to know who gave them breath -CORNELIUS ELMORE ADDISON

Jenna was suddenly full of energy, and they played like long lost sisters. Bonded pairs come through the shelter sometimes, but it's rare to see a cat and a dog so in love with each other. Olivia had come in to adopt a dog with no inkling of finding a new feline BFF as well. Once Olivia saw the bond between Jenna and Gloria, she knew she couldn't separate them. Now, thanks to you, the two get to continue their life together with their new mom. Now that's a happy Gotcha Adoption day story!

Every time you donate towels, food and money; every time you donate your time and resources; every time you remind people to adopt and send them our way; you make these happy endings possible – Thank You!

A Litter Bit of Chips

Your generosity rescues abandoned kittens

Recently, GBHS Animal Control Officer Olivia Swafford arrived at work early one morning to discover a potato chip box sitting at the front gate. One might be tempted to think a good Samaritan left the hardworking employees a treat to show their appreciation. But Olivia, an eight-year veteran in the field, knew better.

Carefully she opened the box and inside was a litter of kittens. Abandoned and tossed aside, these kittens are just the beginning of what will be many litters abandoned at GBHS this summer.

We recruit hundreds of foster volunteers to nurture our summer kitten

and puppy litters, but neonatal care is the most expensive foster placement next to heartworm fosters. Most foster volunteers cannot afford to provide the unique food, supplies, and meds often required by these little ones. Your donations cover these costs.

One of GBHS' most dedicated foster duos is Kaitlin and Trent Giles who have cared for more than eighty animals in their home. They recently purchased a house and dedicated entire rooms for foster animals. They installed cameras, so they can check in 24/7 and created a playground to keep their babes entertained. They even frequently take their fosters on vacation as part of the family! Kaitlin and Trent are just one example of our dedicated foster families. Fosters are the unsung heroes of the GBHS, but without partners like you, rescue is impossible. Your gifts make it possible to provide the training and supplies that save thousands of our most delicate animals.

To learn more about being a foster parent visit www.gbhs.org/communitycare



PRAYERS FOR PAWS

Church of the Highlands' Shows Big Love through their Small Group

"But ask the animals, and they will teach you, or the birds in the sky, and they will tell you..." -JOB 12:7

Lots of people apply to work or volunteer at GBHS. Few make it past the "working" interview. It can be overwhelming. Not so for the fearless, fur-loving, faith-filled, members of Prayers for Paws (PFP), a small group at Church of the Highlands who has been volunteering for the past year.

It's an assault of the senses when you arrive in the morning to help at GBHS. It's incredibly loud. The dogs are barking, jumping, excited at the thought of a walk. You can barely get a slip lead around their head as they jump and dance around the kennels. Poop and pee are everywhere - like they finger painted the walls and floors with it all night. And the smell. The puppies are a chorus of high, whining, howls and kittens and cats mew and reach their paws through the slats vying for your attention. The PFP members come in, patiently opening every kennel, crate, and cage. They softly coo and stroke each furry head.

Jules Herndon, the ring leader of the group, says "the group has a wide variety of talents when it comes to animal care. Marcus is the gentle giant with incredible patience for any shy animal. Catherine loves working with bigger,

energetic dogs - giving them lots of exercise. I get exhausted just watching her. Larry can adjust to whatever a dog needs, whether it is excitable, shy, or terrified. Jennifer, Frank, and Stan, are the "public speakers", with a knack for finding excellent adopters from across a room and evangelizing the mission of GBHS."

Jesus chose unlikely men as apostles, so it's no surprise that several small group members adopted animals that needed a second chance. A dog left on the interstate on New Year's Day. A chihuahua scarred from acid poured on its face. A dog so scared that when it first went home, it slept sitting up. They find joy and comfort in helping and loving the "underdogs".

"I encourage other groups to come in and do what we do. It takes a special heart to stick around, and I'm so blessed that these folks found GBHS and fell in love the way I did. None of us can imagine doing anything else, with anyone else", says Herndon.

To volunteer visit www.gbhs.org/volunteer or contact Daniel Martin, Volunteer Coordinator, at dmartin@gbhs.org



Whether it's sanitizing kennels, walking dogs, or helping animals find their forever homes, the group (a/k/a the "Jules Crew" by staff, in reference to their ringleader, Jules Herndon) intersects the compassion of Christ with the mission of the GBHS.



A BLIND DOG & HER SEEING-EYE DOG

A bonded pair stay together because of you.



What makes a best friend? Think of the person that makes you laugh when you're down and has your back. The friend you can call any time of the day or night, the bestie that tells you not to buy those pants -- who loves you unconditionally.

Blue and Sister have lived together their entire lives, and their bond is strong. Sister, who was born deaf, later had her eyes removed and that's when Blue became Sister's seeing-eye dog, guiding her every step.

When their family had to rehome them, they looked to GBHS to help. Our caring staff knew these special friends would need to be adopted as a pair. Now, how to find that unique, caring and loving family? We posted a special adoption plea, and of course, you helped share that request all over the state!

The Parkman family saw the story and instantly fell in love.

Sherrie and David Parkman had recently lost their beloved Basset Hound, Anniebelle, and



"I would rather walk with a friend in the dark, than alone in the light."
-Helen Keller

were experiencing empty nest syndrome after sending both of their children off to college. When Sherrie stumbled across the GBHS Facebook post highlighting Sister and Blue she shared it with her husband. "We love the misfits," David said when shown the post, "we knew right then that we had to meet this amazing duo."

As soon as the Parkmans saw the pair, they knew they couldn't leave without them. Now Blue and Sister live happily in Springville and are thriving with the consistency that their new family was able to give them. Blue can now sit, shake, come, lay down, is great on a leash, and still loves helping Sister. The Parkmans are continuing to learn Sister's signals and have made her care one of their top priorities. "It's been a little bit of an interesting challenge but they are so sweet and loved, and we really needed something to take care of," Sherrie said. "The best part of our day is when we curl up on the couch together at night. It's when we can pause, rest and reflect on the day behind us and the day before us. I wouldn't trade our struggles for the world."

IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING. REPORT ANIMAL CRUELTY

What should you do if you suspect an animal is in trouble? The answer seems simple -- you would call for help. But jurisdictions can be confusing and who you call and the information and/or evidence you share can mean life or death for an animal in need. The worst response is to do nothing. You may be the only voice the animal has.



HOW TO RESPOND:

SNAP

Please don't trespass. Take a clear picture or video of what you see. If a pet is in a car, note the make, model, and license plate of the car. Use your cell phone flashlight to light the area if it is dark. Do not approach injured animals. Photos often help us get speedier response from law enforcement and they may be important evidence.

MAP

We need the exact address of the animal. This determines which jurisdiction will respond. If you are not sure note the names of the nearest crossroads. If the house has no number, get the nearest house number.

CALL

Contact GBHS Animal Care & Control at 205-591-6522. Our staff will walk you through the reporting process and make sure your complaint gets to the correct agency. Keep a record of who you speak to and at what agency. We will help advocate for the animal in every way we can.

Please do not upload your photo to social media. This can actually harm an officer's ability to help an animal and harm the case.

Common Signs of Neglect or Abuse

- The pet is kept outside with unsanitary food or water and/or inadequate shelter.
- The pet is tethered on a lead that is too short or too heavy or that prohibits the animal from being able to access shelter, water, and/or food.
- Loud and incessant barking or howling may mean a pet has been abandoned -- this usually occurs at an apartment or rental home.
- Animals housed in cages that are too small for them to turn around or move normally.
- Open or infected wounds, ongoing injuries, or illnesses that are not being treated.
- A collar that is so tight that it causes an open neck wound.
- Someone who appears to be hoarding animals (look for evidence that the person has more animals than they can care for).
- Extreme matting of fur and/or fur infested with fleas or ticks.

If you witness the following, please call GBHS at 591-6522 or your local police immediately:

- Observing someone beating or causing violence to an animal.
- A pet left in a car (dogs have died in cars when the outside temperature was 72).
- Signs of severe emaciation (like bones being visible along the back or on the sides).
- Animal fighting.

BECOME A CONSTANT COMPANION TODAY & SAVE LIVES ALL YEAR LONG!



Do you want to help animals year-round? As a Constant Companion monthly donor, you help us save lives every day! Becoming a monthly donor is quick and easy. You simply choose a monthly donation amount that will be processed automatically. It's a convenient way for you to give, and you will provide a steady stream of lifesaving funds to help animals all year long. Constant Companions allow us to spend less on overhead and more on lifesaving services for animals who desperately need help.

We applaud our current 104 monthly donors, like Susan, who have been supporting the animals of GBHS for years. Together they have made a real difference in the lives of so many!

Please join us as a Constant Companion today!








"I love supporting the animals of the Greater Birmingham Humane Society! I figured I could give a dollar a day and 19 years later, I've been able to increase that to \$2 a day. It's such an easy way to make a difference and to know that I'm changing the lives of animals in need, just makes me happy."

- Susan L.



YOUR MONTHLY GIFT OF:

-  **\$10** provides a nutritious meal for three animals in our care
-  **\$25** supplies vaccinations and preventative medication for one pet
-  **\$50** provides spay or neuter surgery for one animal
-  **\$75** provides heartworm treatment for one dog
-  **\$100** helps cover the cost for emergency medical treatment to critically ill animals

To become a Constant Companion, give online, return the enclosed remittance envelope, OR contact the development office at development@gbhs.org or (205) 397-8537.

