

Etobicoke Humane Society

# 2021 Annual Report



# Message from the President

In 2021, our volunteers once again showed their commitment and resiliency to helping our shelter pets in the face of another year dominated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Not only did we survive another year of COVID-19, but we thrived.

We were able to continue operating during an evolving situation by maintaining focus on safety and the care of our cats and dogs. Despite the stress and uncertainty of the year, we persevered while streamlining and modernizing our operations.

Like others in the animal welfare community, we faced a dramatic increase in veterinary costs due to the high demand and lower supply of vet services. Despite this, we were still able to give all of our animals the care that they needed, thanks to the creativity and dedication of our volunteers and team members.

There were also challenges with finding our animals new homes as the adoption surge that began during the beginning of the pandemic plateaued and then started to wane as Ontario opened up and folks went back into the office with the related commutes and socializing that had been missed in 2020.

But there were some bright moments in 2021, including the return of our animals and volunteers to the shelter after moving all of them into foster homes in 2020. And our donors and fundraising team rallied like never before. Our Hope for the Holidays campaign raised a record amount of funds, and as a result, EHS had a financially successful year in 2021.

I am very proud of how our volunteers continued to show up and support our shelter through another difficult year.

I also want to give a special thank you to Cristina Scassa, outgoing EHS President, who steered our small shelter for the past four years. Cristina is continuing her service to EHS by taking on new roles with our dog and fundraising teams. Thank you Cristina for all of your contributions to EHS over the years.

Sincerely,

**Sylvia Kocsondy**



# Our year at a glance

## Continued pandemic response

As the COVID-19 pandemic continued through 2021, our response evolved to match the situation.

We continued our daily cleaning practices and safe volunteer protocols that were introduced in 2020, but we also contracted an outside cleaning company to conduct deeper cleaning of high touch areas of the shelter every two weeks. As the Province of Ontario introduced vaccination passports, we also adopted a policy of requiring volunteers to provide proof of being fully vaccinated with two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine in order to access the shelter. A pre-screening questionnaire was also implemented prior to entry.

As the COVID-19 situation improved, we reopened the shelter to animals and volunteers in September. Access to the public was still restricted in 2021, but client visits were made by appointment. Masks continued to be required and sanitation stations with hand sanitizer and wipes were in place.



## Our Animals

After seeing incredible demand for shelter pets in 2020, adoption numbers declined in the animal rescue community in 2021, including for EHS. We believe this is due to the changing pandemic situation, as Ontario opened up and people wanted to socialize and travel and were less focused on finding a companion to keep them company at home, as well as most people adopting or buying pets in the first stages of the pandemic (almost as if the pet ownership market was saturated). Our dog adoptions were also impacted by a ban on flights to the Caribbean and Mexico in the winter and spring months of 2021, which meant dogs we would normally intake from these countries could not make it to Canada.

We were still able to find homes for many of our cats and dogs and were proud to see that the number of animals returned to the shelter was not higher than we've seen in the past.

### Number of adoptions



**288 cats**  
vs. 430 in 2020



**74 dogs**  
vs. 117 in 2020



## Notable adoptions



### Clover

Clover came into our care as part of a litter of kittens that were born outside. With a sweet, but timid personality, Clover needed a calm and patient family that would help him build his trust and confidence. As a result, he spent 335 days in our care before finding the perfect adopters at the end of December, 2021. We were thrilled that he was able to start his new journey with his family just in time for the New Year.

### Buddy

Buddy was a German Shepherd cross who came to us from Tennessee. He was approximately three-years-old when he arrived and we quickly noticed he had difficulty walking. He was examined by a veterinarian and diagnosed with moderate hip dysplasia, which is a genetic disease common to large dogs. While the condition cannot be cured, we started a treatment plan that included supplements and moderated his exercise to help relieve the symptoms and slow the progression. He reacted so well to his treatment that he was walking and running like any other dog. But we struggled to find an adopter willing to look past his condition. He was with us for almost 200 days before being placed with a foster family, who fell in love with him and became his adopters, giving him a loving home.



## Increased vet costs

Like many things in 2021, the cost of veterinary care increased. All of the vets that we work with to care for our animals increased their prices as demand for vet care for animals increased as more people became pet owners. As a result, our vet expenses were higher than anticipated. We also faced difficulty with access to veterinary care as appointments weren't readily available. Thanks to the creativity and dedication of our volunteers, we were still able to ensure all of our animals received the care they needed.

## New additions to the leadership team

At the halfway point of 2021, we saw changes to our leadership team, as a new President and three new Board Members At Large were elected to the Board during our Annual General Meeting. Sylvia Kocsondy took over from Cristina Scassa, who had been EHS President for four years and had completed her term. Sylvia was already a part of the EHS family, having volunteered in a Managing Director role since 2019. We were pleased to have several candidates apply for the other Board positions and welcomed the new additions who brought fresh ideas and excitement to the organization.

# Our volunteers

We were pleased to be able to welcome volunteers back to the shelter for regular shifts after operating with minimal staffing for more than a year. All of our volunteers worked very hard to ensure our animals were getting the best care possible, while also being retrained in their positions, following COVID-19 safety protocols, vaccination requirements and other logistics.

## Volunteer spotlight

### Laura Taylor | Cat Team



Laura joined EHS as a volunteer in November 2019 on the Cat Surrender Team. This team works with individuals in the community and beyond to help safely surrender cats into the care of EHS so they can find their forever home.

After two years of working in that department, she volunteered to head up the Transportation and Supply Team – managing a team of 20+ drivers who deliver food and supplies to EHS' network of foster homes around the GTA as well as taking cats to and from vet appointments. The Transport team is always an important part of shelter operations, but during the pandemic, they became even more important as we relied on fosters to care for the majority of our animals.

In this role, Laura helped develop EHS' first Driver Handbook and has onboarded a number of volunteers to the team.

Laura also works with the Cat Coordinating Team to find specialty food and supplies for any cat at EHS that requires such a diet. Finally, she coordinates the packaging and delivery of supplies weekly to our foster network.

### Leslie Byrne, Barbara Howe, Laurie Burnett, Tish Jerome | Dog Team



This group of volunteers worked together to coordinate the training of a large number of new volunteers as well as the retraining of returning volunteers who had not been in the shelter for some time due to the pandemic. To do this, they developed new training standards and documentation, implemented training through Zoom and developed training videos in addition to in-person training. By doing this, they were able to ensure our shelter was prepared to welcome dogs back into the shelter after being in foster homes for most of the pandemic.

**We want to recognize our network of cat and dog fosters for the amazing work they did to expand our network so we could continue to accommodate our animals throughout the pandemic.**

# Investments in the Organization

For most of the year our shelter was quiet as our animals were almost entirely staying in foster homes. We took advantage of this quiet time to complete much needed work inside the shelter including the cleaning of the ceilings and installation of new lighting in the back dog area, installing a commercial dishwasher and building new cat cages in our back room.

Our fundraising team also focused on improving our donor database, which allows us to better track our donor information, leading to better insights into where our donations are coming from and ultimately allowing us to improve our fundraising efforts.

## Fundraising

Our shelter is funded entirely by donations, which means our fundraising team is an essential part of our organization. In 2021, the team was once again operating in a pandemic environment and had to rely on creativity and virtual fundraising tactics to ensure we had the right amount of funds to care for our animals and operate the shelter.

## Campaigns

Notable campaigns included **Get Your Move On**, a virtual fundraiser that encouraged participants to raise money while completing activities such as walking, biking or doing sit-ups. This fundraiser raised \$25,000, which was earmarked to help pay for veterinary costs.



Our annual **Hope for the Holidays** campaign is our largest fundraiser of the year and raised approximately \$250,000 for the shelter, which is a record amount for this annual campaign. Several large donations were made to the campaign from supporters who have pledged money each year, helping to ensure our fundraiser was a success.

## Awards

In 2021, our 2020 Hope for the Holidays campaign was recognized with two awards. We were winners of the Best Fundraising campaign in the 20+ staff category in the first ever CharityVillage Conference Awards that were handed out in November. These awards are important as they recognize the efforts of non-profit organizations like EHS.

We also won an award from the Toronto Chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators, which is a professional organization for people in the communications and public relations industry. The award recognized our campaign's communications strategy.

## Legacy gifts

We were thankful to be the recipients of several large legacy gifts from supporters who had recognized EHS as beneficiaries following their passing. We always appreciate these thoughtful gifts as it shows us how much our shelter is appreciated by supporters. When we receive this type of donation, we always look for meaningful ways to use the funds, such as for special projects to benefit our animals.

## Monthly donations

In addition to campaigns, we put a focus on growing the number of monthly donors in 2021. Monthly donations provide a stable and predictable source of funds, which allows us to care for our animals. Having this reliable source of funds helps us plan for the future and allows us to care for the day-to-day needs of our pets, such as food, toys and supplies. It's also helpful for when an emergency arises.

Throughout the year we added more than 90 new monthly donors, providing us with a stable and predictable source of funds for our operations.

### Donor spotlight

We continued to benefit from participation in **Delta Bingo's Charitable Gaming**, Community Good program. Prior to the pandemic, EHS volunteers would attend Bingo sessions at the Delta St. Clair in exchange for a donation to the shelter through the program. As in-person gaming sessions were switched to virtual options, we continued to benefit from the program by promoting our involvement on our social media channels. In exchange, Delta Bingo was able to provide a monthly donation during months when virtual gaming was active.



# Sanctuary Program

2021 was the third year our Sanctuary Program was in operation. This unique program ensures cats and dogs in our care who are approaching end-of-life or have medical or physical issues that prevent them from being adopted, receive medical, physical and emotional care for as long as necessary. Many of the pets are not expected to leave the Sanctuary Program, but some are able to receive care to correct a significant medical defect, which may take an extended amount of time, before being able to find a forever home.

In 2021, 15 cats and 1 dog benefitted from the Sanctuary program.

We are very grateful to the **Bedolfe Foundation** for providing the majority of funding for this program. It would not be possible without their generous support.

## Dahlia



On December 30<sup>th</sup>, our long-time sanctuary cat Dahlia passed after her health rapidly deteriorated. Dahlia was an approximately 17-year-old cat that had been in our care for almost five years, as she grappled with multiple health conditions. She was rescued outside in February 2017 when an EHS volunteer was walking her dogs and found her extremely thin, laying in a puddle. She was emaciated, severely matted and very weak. On intake, Dahlia was extremely malnourished, had dental disease, fleas, a poor coat, and heart murmur. She weighed only five pounds, less than half of what she should have weighed. She was eventually diagnosed with Irritable Bowel Disease (IBD) and placed on a special diet and daily medication. Dahlia went into long term foster with a volunteer, where she thrived and went up to her ideal weight of 11 lbs. In recent years Dahlia developed more medical complications which we were able to manage but unfortunately, as strong and tough as Dahlia was, she was never able to be fully adopted and remained in our sanctuary program. She was given a second chance at life because of this program, our volunteers who would not give up on her and her loving foster home. She was able to show us her sweet, cuddly, feisty sides and she felt loved until the very end.



# Financial Breakdown

As an all-volunteer organization, we have no paid staff. This allows us to direct the majority of the funds raised for the shelter towards the care of our cats and dogs.

Revenue	2021	2020
Donations, fundraising and memberships	\$650,377	\$580,153
Adoption and Surrender fees	\$89,430	\$132,194
Other	\$12,051	\$22,689
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$751,858</b>	<b>\$735,036</b>
Operation expenditures		
Veterinary bills	\$301,709	\$291,778
Animal supplies	\$123,654	\$71,222
Fundraising	\$12,810	\$6,546
Administration	\$128,081	\$121,737
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$566,254</b>	<b>\$491,283</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$185,604</b>	<b>\$243,753</b>

## Vet costs are our largest expense

Octavia was abandoned at our shelter in a box, which was taped shut. When our volunteers unpacked her from the box, she was very scared and it was discovered she had telephone cord wrapped around her neck

Volunteers were not able to examine her right away, but when she was being loaded into a carrier for her first vet appointment, volunteers made a shocking discovery. Most of Octavia's rear left leg was missing.

Tripod cats are not uncommon when working in animal rescue and we've had several at the shelter over the years, however at her official intake appointment the vet noted the amputation was not surgical and was likely due to trauma.

The vet determined that what was left of the limb was causing Octavia a good deal of pain and the decision was made to amputate the remainder of the limb. This was an expensive surgery, and unexpected cost for EHS at about \$2,000, but as we aim to give the animals in our care the best possible chance at a happy and healthy life, we booked the procedure so Octavia would not have to live in pain. Her surgery was a huge success and she was adopted once she was fully healthy.

After hearing Octavia's story, we received an outpouring of support in the form of donations that covered her surgery costs and much more. We were very thankful for our supporters who once again stepped up to help our animals.



**\$301,709**

Vet costs



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