

ETOBICOKE HUMANE SOCIETY



Annual Report 2023



AN INDEPENDENT, ALL-VOLUNTEER ANIMAL SHELTER

OUR LEADERSHIP

A Message from The President

2023 saw the end of the COVID-19 pandemic declared, resulting in many people returning to workplaces, finding new jobs, as well as feeling the financial impacts of a looming recession on their household. The impact on animal welfare across the county was an increase in surrenders as **pet owners no longer had time to care for their pets, or afford veterinary and pet care expenses.**

It was a difficult year for our small shelter and we saw many of our animals wait longer periods of time to find a home as adoption rates slowed. At the same time, we were trying our best to take in animals from municipal shelters that would be facing possible euthanasia due to overcrowding.

The bright light during all of this was our volunteers. As a 100% volunteer operation we take great pride in being able to use the diverse range of skills, expertise and experience our volunteers bring to the table. We witnessed our volunteers help us grow and succeed through various committees, special projects and teams that were established to respond to the issues our industry faced. Our volunteers used their creative thinking to find new and inventive ways to boost adoptions for our cats and dogs with various campaigns and fun postings on social media.

We were able to return to in-person events and our volunteers represented EHS out in the community at events such as Taste of the Kingsway. This helped raise awareness of EHS, boost the profiles of our animals and build partnerships with like-minded organizations.

I want to thank the Board of Directors for their work in developing our new three-year strategic plan. This will guide our work through to 2026 and includes four pillars: volunteer engagement, community engagement, process improvement and expense management.

OUR VOLUNTEERS HELP US GROW AND SUCCEED THROUGH VARIOUS COMMITTEES, SPECIAL PROJECTS AND TEAMS THAT WERE ESTABLISHED TO RESPOND TO THE ISSUES OUR INDUSTRY FACED.

And I must recognize our generous donors, who continued to support us despite difficult and unstable economic times. **2023 saw a record amount of donations**, which was very important as our expenses—particularly vet care—once again increased. Without our donors we would not be able to do what we do.

While challenges with pet rescue will likely continue for some time, I have full confidence that **our small shelter with the big heart** will continue to thrive and help even more animals find their forever homes.

Sincerely,
Joanne Feather
President
Etobicoke Humane Society



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100%
Volunteer Run

AS A 100% VOLUNTEER OPERATION WE TAKE GREAT PRIDE IN BEING ABLE TO USE THE DIVERSE RANGE OF SKILLS, EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE OUR VOLUNTEERS BRING TO THE TABLE.

YEAR AT A GLANCE

Decline in Adoptions

In 2023, we saw the development of a crisis in animal rescue.

Adoptions plummeted across Canada as inflation put extreme pressure on day-to-day living expenses and many people were having to choose between housing and feeding themselves or keeping their pets.

Vet costs continued to increase and many people could not afford the mounting expenses. **Municipal shelters were flooded with abandoned animals** and were faced with making difficult decisions due to lack of space.

As a no-kill shelter, we stepped in to help the municipal animal shelters as much as possible, taking cats and dogs that would be on euthanasia lists. But our own adoption numbers were shockingly low, with **many dogs staying with us for months and months at a time**. Our cat adoptions were slightly better, but still not near what we saw pre-pandemic.

AS A NO-KILL SHELTER, WE STEPPED IN TO HELP THE MUNICIPAL ANIMAL SHELTERS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, TAKING CATS AND DOGS THAT WOULD BE ON EUTHANASIA LISTS.



40
dogs adopted
in 2023

74
dogs adopted
in 2022



253
cats adopted
in 2023

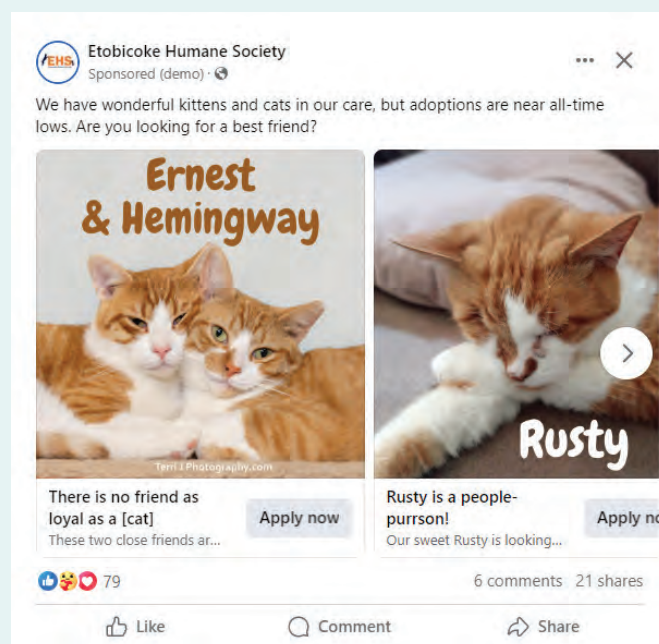
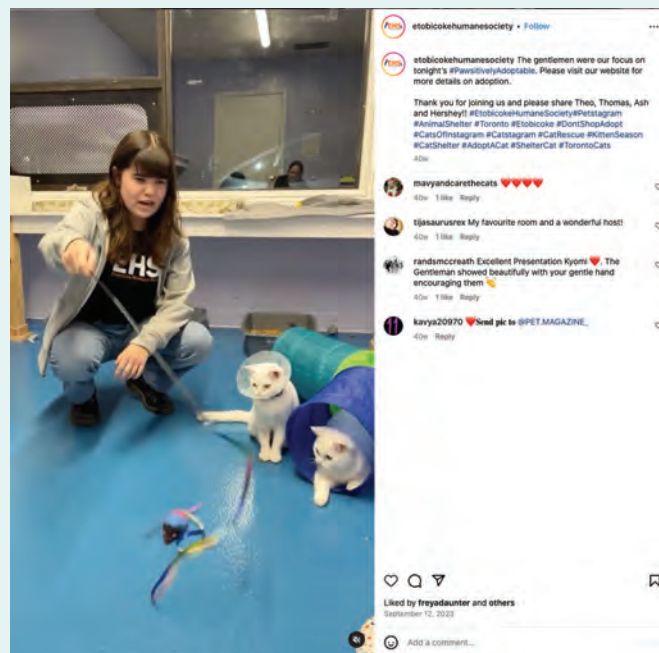
197
cats adopted
in 2022

Shifting Our Focus

Due to the crisis in adoptions, a team of volunteers, led by the Communications and Marketing Team, switched from focusing mostly on fundraising, to developing new and creative ways to find our pets their forever homes. Some of the tactics used included:

- Pawsitively Adoptable:**
 Instagram Live segments held from spring to fall that featured a dog or multiple cats. The segments were broadcast live from the shelter and provided an opportunity for people to see our animals and how they interact with people and also provided a video that could be shared separately afterwards.
- Take Me Home Tuesday on CP24:**
 About once a month, we went down to the CP24 studio with a dog or a cat (or even a group of kittens) to show off our adoptable pets.
- Social Media ads:**
 We ran social media ads on Facebook and Instagram to target our ideal adopters. These ads allowed us to target location, certain demographics, as well as people who had searched terms such as Husky, or German Shepherd.

DEVELOPING NEW AND CREATIVE WAYS TO FIND OUR PETS THEIR FOREVER HOMES.



SUCCESS STORY

Zoe on CP24



Zoe came to us after being found as a stray in the Hamilton area. She was estimated to be about four years old. She was a beautiful Labrador/Hound mix with the most gorgeous coloured fur. We suspected she had come from a home as she would freeze while out on a walk if she was brought into a residential area; almost as if she was looking for her family. We knew we had to find her a loving home, and after appearing on **CP24 for the Take Me Home Tuesday** segment in September, she was adopted by a wonderful family with a large backyard.



Cat Adoption Summer Promotion

From July until the beginning of September, our cat team lowered adoption fees **in an effort to boost adoptions**. For adopters with an established history of providing veterinary care for their pets, the adoption fee was lowered to \$75, which was \$100 off the regular fee. First-time animal owners, or those without a vet reference, received \$25 off the adoption fee, making it \$150.

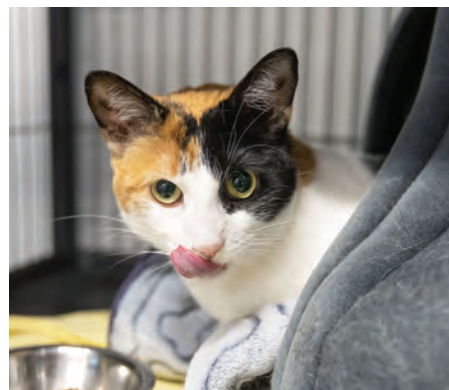


Summer
Cat Adoption
Days

July 15 – September 4

Up to \$100 off cat adoption fees
all summer

The graphic features a white background with a blue brushstroke effect behind the dates. On the right side, there are three circular inset photos of cats: a tabby kitten on a cat tree, a black and white cat being petted, and an orange and white cat. The background of the graphic has faint palm tree silhouettes.



NOTABLE ADOPTIONS

Zinga

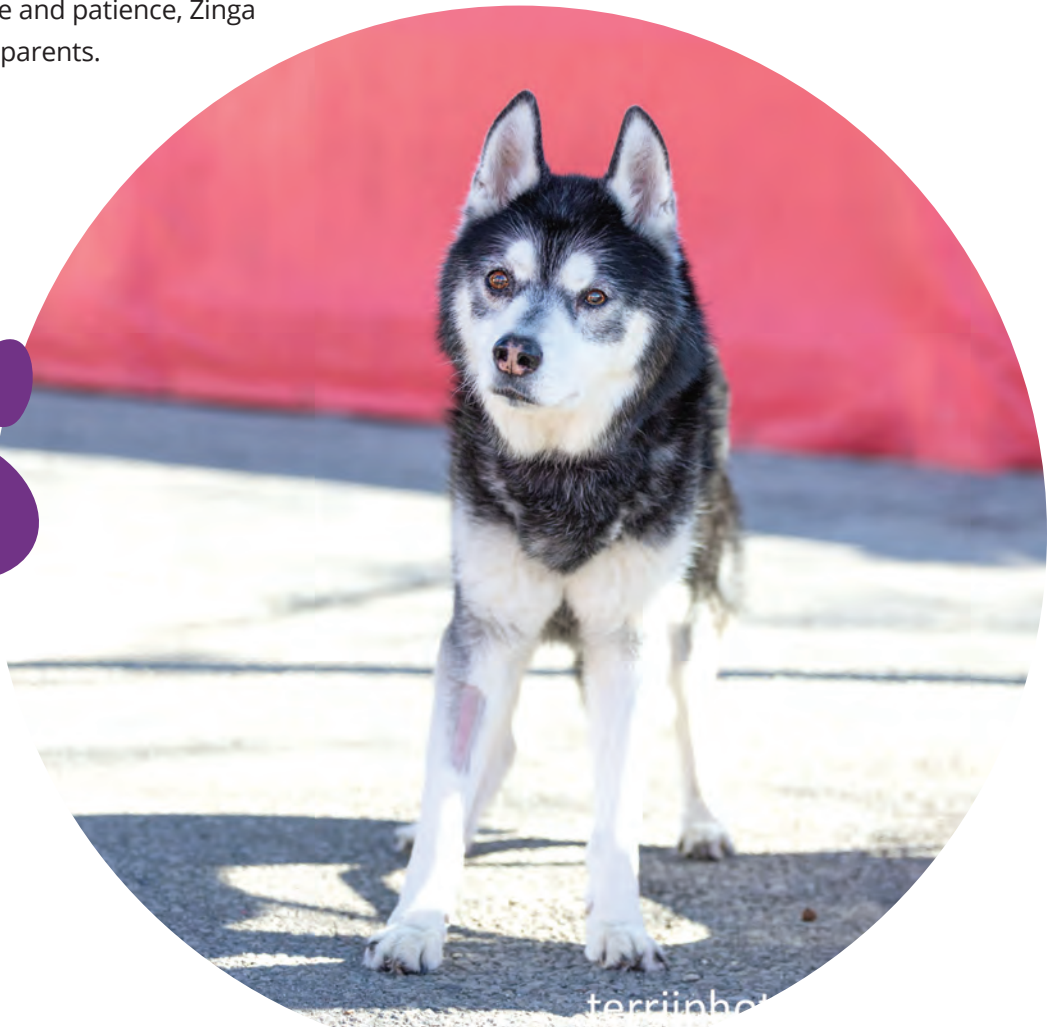
Zinga, a sweet, senior husky, came to EHS from a local pound where he was surrendered when his family could no longer care for him. He required dental work and had arthritis, but otherwise was a healthy boy. Zinga's calm, quiet nature made him a favourite at the shelter. He loved to snooze on the sofa, but when out and about in the neighbourhood, he was quite spry and always on the hunt for a squirrel.

Zinga adjusted well to the shelter but was moved to a foster home where he would be more comfortable while waiting to be adopted.

Zinga was with us for 152 days, but when he found his new family, it wasn't necessarily what we expected. **A young couple wanted to give a senior dog a second chance at having a good home.** When they met Zinga it was love at first sight and they couldn't wait to have him join the family. With time and patience, Zinga settled into life with his new parents.

EHS was able to get Zinga the medical care he needed and help him transition to his new family. Today, Zinga's favourite time is when he's investigating the shale beach at the cottage. He still loves his afternoon naps but he now has several dog friends and enjoys playing with them in the water. Zinga's parents adore him; he is well cared for and they are committed to ensuring his senior years are the best years of his life!

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Mystique



VOLUNTEER BECCA GORDON WITH MYSTIQUE AND ACTOR NATHAN FILLION.

At 15 years of age Mystique found herself surrendered to us after the untimely passing of her owner. She had been purchased as a kitten from a breeder and lived her whole life with one person.

Senior cats, and especially Bengals, are not usually ideal temperaments for shelter life, but Mystique surprised us all by entering the shelter and taking over. Despite her dislike of other cats, Mystique was sweet and energetic. Some volunteers were so charmed by her, that they brought in special swings, beds and more to make Mystique feel at home.

This larger than life personality was featured on CP24 Breakfast's Take Me Home Tuesday segment. **While at the studio, she got to meet Nathan Fillion**, who was there promoting a TV show. She was also featured in our Valentine's Day campaign which used dating profiles for the cats to find adopters.

Happily, after 372 days with us, Mystique went to her forever home where she is thriving. Her adopter provided a lovely message to us after she went home: "She responds best to Mysty, turning her head whenever she hears it. I think we're doing great. One of her favorite things is to go for walks in the apartment hallway—sometimes 3 or 5 circuits. She occasionally will turn it into a race and she'll jump up and gallop round the corner down the straight and into the apartment.

She has the run of the apartment, sometimes she sleeps with me for part of the night, does some zoomies, then sleeps in her kitty condo. Having her in my life has been one of the best things that has happened to me. Thank you so much for EHS in bringing us together."

CHALLENGES

Increased Vet Costs



As inflation affected vet costs for pet owners, it also impacted our budget, as all of the veterinarians we rely on increased their pricing. This meant our standard costs—such as spays and neuters—went up, but so did specialty care, such as surgeries.

Nina

Nina came to us from a municipal shelter after being found as a stray. We knew right away that she had issues with her back legs, as she had an abnormal gait and would be stiff when getting up. Our vets determined she needed surgery to correct luxating patella, which causes the kneecap to come out of place. Her condition caused her to sit oddly, and also caused arthritis in her hips.

Before Nina could get her surgery, we needed to secure an appropriate foster home for her so she could comfortably recover. It took some time, but we were able to find her a foster and her surgery went well. **Nina was able to recover from the surgery and was adopted** once she had a clean bill of health.

Her surgery cost approximately \$6,000, but was well worth it to see her get her happy ending.





Moira

Moira arrived in our care as a rescue from a municipal shelter. She was at risk of being euthanized because of chronic diarrhea and vomiting. She was a one-year-old cat who weighed the same as a five-to-six-month old kitten. From her first vet appointment with our veterinary partners it was clear there was an underlying condition causing her illness.

After some diagnostics it was discovered Moira had intussusception of her jejunum, which meant part of her small intestine had folded into an adjacent part causing an obstruction. This affected many internal organs and would continue to cause issues and eventually death if it wasn't fixed. She also had anemia. It was quickly decided she would require surgery. Ultimately, this was an incredibly expensive trip to the vet and just the beginning of her recovery.

All indications were that this young and **vibrant cat could make a full recovery** if this issue was resolved. With the approval of our Board, Moira underwent

ULTIMATELY, THIS WAS AN INCREDIBLY EXPENSIVE TRIP TO THE VET AND JUST THE BEGINNING OF HER RECOVERY.

surgery. Testing was performed on materials from the surgical site which showed that a piece of plant material was embedded in her intestine and may have caused the intussusception. Her hospitalization and surgery costs were just over \$7000.

After many months of recovery in a loving foster home, follow-ups and rechecks, Moira is now healthy, and has been adopted into a loving forever home.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Cat Volunteer, Marla Cheeseman



"I originally started volunteering at EHS because I love all animals, but in particular I love cats, and I was looking for a way to give back. **Six years later I am still volunteering with EHS** because my volunteer role has been so rewarding and ever expanding. I started off as a Shift Volunteer, and now, in addition to that I am on the Med Team, the Shy Cat Team and am responsible for taking the photos to be displayed on the cat kennels. It makes me feel so good to know that my contributions are making such a difference in the lives of so many cats and also making a difference for their ultimate adopters."



SPECIALTY CARE

Sanctuary Program

Our Sanctuary Program continued to offer a second chance for cats and dogs in our care who are approaching end-of-life or have medical or physical issues that prevent them from being adopted. This unique program provides care for as long as necessary by placing these animals into foster homes. EHS covers the costs of caring for the animals, which can often include medications or other treatments. Many of the pets are not expected to leave the Sanctuary Program, but with the right care, some are able to recover from health or physical issues to become well enough to be adopted.

**2023 marked the fifth year this program has been operating.
This year, we helped 3 dogs and 10 cats.**



Lina

Lina arrived in our care in March 2022, coming from northern Manitoba. Lina had been used for breeding and was kept in a cage, where she wore down her teeth from chewing on the bars.

Lina was placed in a foster home where she could adjust to a new life, enjoying time outdoors and with people. A few months after being with us, we noticed she was developing weakness in her back legs. Our first suspicion was hip dysplasia, which is common in German Shepherds. But after seeing a vet, she was diagnosed with degenerative myelopathy, which is a disease that affects the spinal cord in dogs, causing progressive muscle weakness and loss of coordination.

Because of this, we moved Lina into our sanctuary program and found a foster who could provide her with a home with easy access to outside space, as her mobility was getting worse.

A few months after moving to her new foster home, Lina lost all strength in her hind legs. With the help of a generous donor, we acquired a wheelchair for



her so she could continue to **enjoy her second chance at life.**

All of this is possible because of our sanctuary program. We want to thank all of our generous donors, but especially the Bedolfe Foundation, who have funded this program for several years, allowing us to take care of cats and dogs that would otherwise not be adoptable.

FUNDRAISING

Campaigns



Our fundraising team continued to work hard to ensure our shelter had the funds it needs to care for our animals. This was especially important at a time when the cost of living has increased for many people and we wondered whether our generous donors would still be in a position to help us. We relied on past campaign ideas that we knew were successful and also introduced new ideas to make sure we kept our donors engaged in our cause. We are proud to say that through our efforts, we raised more money than at any other time in our past, which is testament to the generosity of our supporters.



Kitten Shower

Knowing that kitten season is something that happens every year, and has a large impact on our finances, the fundraising team developed a specific campaign to help offset the costs we knew would be coming. To do this, we held a virtual kitten shower, which acted **like a baby shower where people could purchase gifts from our wishlists**, or donate money. Traditionally, kitten showers are one day events, usually held at a shelter. But since our kittens are kept in foster homes until they've had all of their shots, this type of set-up wasn't possible. As we have had success with virtual

fundraisers in the past, we developed a campaign that ran for approximately three weeks. During this time, we shared birth stories as the litters were born, provided lots of cute kitten content through our social media channels, email blasts and creative interactive games for people to play, such as kitten trivia (also done through our social media channels). Once again, our supporters were very generous! We raised more than \$20,000 in funds and supplies, which went a long way towards covering the costs of the kittens born in our care.

Hope for the Holidays

We also held our second virtual 50/50 raffle, which was part of our Hope for the Holidays campaign. The raffle had ticket sales of \$46,670, with half going to a lucky winner and half going to our shelter. We designated our half of the pot to go towards vet care for our animals, which is our biggest expense.

In addition to the 50/50 draw, our overall Hope for the Holidays campaign was another success, raising approximately \$410,000. This is always **our largest fundraiser of the year** and allows us to budget for the upcoming year.

**Raised
\$410,000**



Monthly Donations

In 2023, we added 16 new Monthly Donors, for a total of \$560 per month and \$8,960 per year. **Monthly donations are extremely important** for our fundraising efforts, as the donations are steady and predictable funds that we can rely on each month. This allows us to plan and budget some of our costs.

**16 New
Donors**

**Raised
\$8,960**

TO BECOME A MONTHLY DONOR, VISIT [ETOBICOKEHUMANESOCIETY.COM/DONATE](https://etobicokehumane.com/donate)

MONEY MATTERS

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.

In 2023, we saw a record amount raised through fundraising and donations, but at the same time, our costs increased, especially for veterinary care.

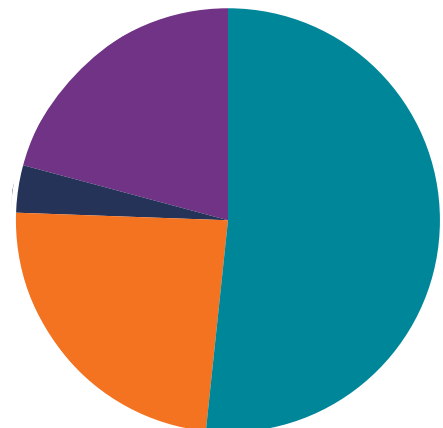
REVENUE	2023	2022
Donations, Fundraising and Memberships	844,614	687,784
Adoption & Surrender Fees	62,805	66,894
Other	49,783	79,799
Total	\$957,202	\$834,477

EXPENDITURES	2023	2022
Veterinary Bills	450,517	360,998
Animal Supplies	197,736	154,675
Fundraising	24,229	49,193
Administration	169,587	167,149
Total	\$842,069	\$732,015

NET INCOME	2023	2022
Total	\$115,133	\$102,462

How we spent our revenue

- **53.5%** Veterinary Bills
- **23.5%** Animal Supplies
- **2.9%** Fundraising
- **20.1%** Administration



Veterinary Costs



All of our animals are spayed or neutered before adoption, and these costs can really add up. Each year, we see a baby boom with kittens in the spring and each kitten, along with their mothers, will be fixed. They'll also receive any other vet care they need, such as vaccinations. The average cost per kitten—including food—is \$750.

In 2023, On Mother's Day, Nola gave birth to seven kittens. **This was the priciest litter of the season**, coming in at \$5,250. We were able to find homes for all of the kittens and Nola, and all of their care was covered thanks to donors who made donations during our Kitten Shower fundraiser.

Vet Bills:
\$450,517



A SINCERE THANK YOU TO ALL THE DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS WHOSE DEDICATION MADE A DIFFERENCE TO SO MANY LIVES IN 2023.

SMALL SHELTER *Big Heart*



Fosters Wanted!

We're always looking for foster homes for animals in need. Fostering a cat or dog is a rewarding experience that also helps us increase the number of animals we can care for. If you're curious, contact us to learn more!



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