

# PAWsitive News

Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society



Winter 2024

## DISASTER AVERTED



**Both entrance roads to CHHS were blocked in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene due to downed trees and power lines.**

Folks in western North Carolina will never forget the date of September 27, 2024. That's when Hurricane Helene became the deadliest, and costliest, storm in the state's history. At the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society, we were lucky. Although our property sustained some damage, including both of our entrance roads blocked by downed trees and power lines, our buildings, staff and animals were unharmed.

Our shelter was closed to the public for about a week after the storm. We had no electricity, but our generators kicked on until we ran out of propane for the Canine Adoption Center. As a

result, our heroic staff cleaned kennels in the dark for several days. We had no internet, cell or landline phone service, and in the days immediately following Helene's landfall, there were local gas shortages and cash-only transactions were the norm at area stores. But make no mistake. We were very fortunate. Disaster was averted, and we did not suffer the unimaginable

heartache, loss and tragedy that our neighbors just to the east of us did. Everything we had to deal with was inconvenient, but far from catastrophic.

Through it all, our staff was amazing. They left their homes each day, nearly all of them without power, water and phone service at home, navigating partially cleared roads, and they came into work to care for our shelter pets. One of our employees didn't have power restored at her home for three weeks, but she never missed a day of work.

Our shelter, and our shelter pets, survived the storm. And although it's a little slower than normal right now for adoptions and donations, we know our animal-loving community will come back stronger than ever. And we truly appreciate your kindness, your compassion, and your support.



**This is why we do what we do.**



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



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# SAVE THE DATE!

## Pawsitively Purrfect Party

**Monday, June 16, 2025**

**The Country Club of Sapphire Valley**



After a five-year absence, we celebrated a heartwarming return to The Country Club of Sapphire Valley in 2024 with an appropriately-named gala called "Coming Home". The event was so successful that we are bringing back a beloved annual tradition at CCSV with our elegant gala known as Pawsitively Purrfect Party. Please save the date! Individual seats and group table purchases will be available on our website ([chhumanesociety.org](http://chhumanesociety.org)) in early 2025.

## PUTTS FOR PAWS



Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society

Our fun-filled golf tournament for the CHHS shelter pets returns in 2025 for a 4th year at an all-new course and a new date. Details are still being finalized but more information will be coming soon. To be on the list for updates, please email [golf@chhumanesociety.org](mailto:golf@chhumanesociety.org).

## HIGHLANDS COUNTRY CLUB



Our busy 2025 fundraising season will also include a brand new third fundraiser in Fall 2025! CHHS will premiere a new themed event at the beautiful and prestigious Highlands Country Club, our first-ever fundraiser at this gorgeous location. Look for more details to be announced this Spring.

# HAPPY TAILS AND FOREVER HOMES



Although 2024 was filled with challenges for adopting families, with economic hardships such as rising housing costs and animal care expenses, hundreds of CHHS Adopting Angels were still able to open their heart and home for the unconditional love of a CHHS shelter pet. Here are some of the Happy Tails in 2024, and they serve as a reminder that this is why we do what we do.



(from the July 2024 issue of Mountain Life Magazine, a publication of The Highlander)

## CONGRATULATIONS KAITLYN & KIM!

Two more members of the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society have joined the 10-Year Club. Executive Director David Stroud was the first to join this club in May 2022, and Assistant Shelter Manager Jodi Henkel joined in December 2023. Now, a mother-daughter duo are the newest members of the decade club.

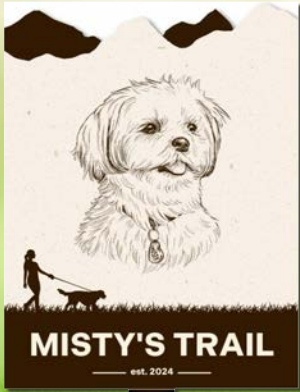
CHHS Development Manager Kim Moss hit her milestone decade in May 2024, and Shelter Manager Kaitlyn Villarreal celebrated her decade one month later.

The Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society is incredibly blessed to have all four top managers at the shelter working together as a team for 10+ years!



# Misty's TRAIL

A beautiful professionally-designed trail on our 10-acre campus for dog walking volunteers & CHHS shelter pups  
1/2 mile round trip length in two separate loops • One 1/4 mile easy & one 1/4 mile strenuous  
15 Memorial Benches • 2 Rainbow Bridge "remembrance" areas



Our annual open house this summer was extra special because it featured one of our famous "ribbon-chewings" starring Kane, the longest canine resident at our no-kill shelter. Kane chewed the hot dog that broke the ribbon and officially opened Misty's Trail, a beautiful path in the woods on our 10-acre campus for our beloved dog walking volunteers.



## PAINT YOUR PET

Our inaugural Paint Your Pet in July 2024 was a magnificent success! A sold-out group of 100 animal lovers gathered together at our gracious host, Sapphire Valley Resort, and shared their evening with us creating beautiful masterpieces of their beloved pampered pets. Our heartfelt thanks to our wonderful and talented artist partner Be a Light Painting LLC, our generous sponsors The Village Hound and Cashiers Valley Real Estate, our raffle prize donors, and the incredible team at Slopeside Tavern who donated a portion of their proceeds that night to benefit the shelter pets at Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society.

And to all those who have already been asking... yes indeed, we're going to Paint Your Pet in 2025! The date hasn't been finalized yet but it will be in the summer. Stay tuned to our website and Facebook page for the official announcement!



# CRITTER CAMP



In 2019 when we introduced Critter Camp, our summer series of week-long humane education day camps for local schoolchildren, I made the following statement: "This is the greatest community outreach program in our history".

Five years later, I stand by that statement.

Critter Camp teaches important skills about responsible pet ownership, dog bite prevention, the importance of spay/neuter, kindness towards animals, compassion for their survival, and a respect for the habitat that we share. Critter Camp provides these amazing kids with the tools they need to be our animal welfare ambassadors of tomorrow.

The highlight of each week of Critter Camp is on Friday with what we call the "Graduation Hike". This year's series of Graduation Hikes were made

all the more special because the hikes took place on our all-new Misty's Trail. One of the special places on the trail is our "Rainbow Bridge Tree", an arched trunk of a tree bending down to where we have mounted a plaque with a poem about the Rainbow Bridge.

It is always a great honor to serve as one of the adult chaperones for the Graduation Hike. Every time I have had the privilege to take that hike with these campers, it reminds me of another thing I said in 2019 when we launched this program: "The future of animal welfare really doesn't have much to do with animals. That may sound strange but it's true. The future of animal welfare actually has everything to do with children."- David Stroud

With just a few simple words in your will you can help animals long into the future. Plan a bright future for yourself, your family, your pets, and the animals at CHHS who need you. Use your assets as you need them and then leave a lasting legacy in your will to the many dogs and cats that need help.

The CHHS Legacy Society is an initiative to promote planned giving among those who hold CHHS close to their heart. You also gain the satisfaction of directing your gift to three important areas: support of the facilities, direct support of the animals, and program development. Help to ensure that the humane society you love will have the resources necessary to sustain it into the future.

Gifts to CHHS are essential to the continued growth, strength, and excellence of our organization, and a planned gift is one of the best ways to represent a sound investment for generations to come. For more information, please visit [chhumanesociety.org/legacy-giving](http://chhumanesociety.org/legacy-giving) or email [david@chhumanesociety.org](mailto:david@chhumanesociety.org).



**CHHS LEGACY SOCIETY**

# From the Executive Director

Think about where you were in 2014. Jay Leno hosted The Tonight Show for the last time. The "Ice Bucket Challenge" became a global phenomenon. For the first time ever, a space probe landed on the surface of a comet, and Apple announced the release of the "groundbreaking" iPhone 6. There was a worldwide virus threat. No, it wasn't COVID. It was Ebola.

For the Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society, the highlight of 2014 was when two amazing, compassionate animal lovers joined our team. Fast forward a decade later, and CHHS now has all four members of its top management celebrating their 10th anniversary (or more) working together as a team on behalf of the animals in our community.

To me, a decade of working together, sharing the same vision, passion, and compassion for rescue, care, and adoption has been beyond amazing. Staff turnover in the animal shelter world averages approximately 50% per year. Our turnover rate in 2023 was zero. This year, we only lost and replaced one position among our animal care team, and guess what... if you look back to the front cover and read that passage: "One of our employees didn't have power restored at her home for three weeks, but she never missed a day of work." Well, that was the "new kid" on the staff.

We have an amazing team of animal welfare professionals. And in addition to all four managers commemorating 10+ years, we also have multiple team members with several years under their belt and they tell me they're going to go the distance for 10+ years, too. And I believe them.



On a personal note, for the past 12 years I have always looked forward to the "end-of-season" grant presentation at the Wade Hampton Golf Club. Being in the room at Wade Hampton with more than two dozen other nonprofits is always one of the most humbling evenings of the year for me. I am in awe of the amazing services each one of those very worthy causes provides on the plateau. This year, I was beyond humbled and most very surprised to be recognized as the recipient of the 2024 Wade Hampton Golf Club Community Leadership Award. I am honored and grateful for the support from Wade Hampton and everyone in this very special animal-loving community who make it possible for us to continue our lifesaving mission.

David Stroud, Executive Director  
Cashiers-Highlands Humane Society

**Please consider a year-end tax-deductible gift to support our lifesaving work.**

**By mail:** CHHS, P.O. Box 638, Cashiers, NC 28717

**To charge your donation with a credit card:** Please call (828)743-5769

**To donate online:** Visit our website [www.chhumanesociety.org](http://www.chhumanesociety.org) and click on the red "Donate" button at the top right of the home page.



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



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## 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](http://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.