

GEORGIAN TRIANGLE HUMANE SOCIETY DONOR NEWSLETTER



FEBRUARY 2022 EDITION

Spotlight on The Zoey Foundation

The GTHS team would like to take the opportunity to recognize the Zoey Foundation, a family foundation that does incredible work behind the scenes to facilitate the GTHS Animal Transfer Program.

Not only does the Zoey Foundation almost entirely fund the GTHS Transfer Program, its founders, Lynn and Derrick March, work tirelessly to volunteer directly with many of the animals that come through transfers whether it be on a mission-based rescue run or when animals return to their home through foster care.

"I started the Zoey Foundation because I could see that money was the number one impediment to every animal finding a happy ending. The transport program is a perfect example. No one will argue that moving pets from regions where they have no hope of finding a home, to areas where there are many loving homes waiting to welcome a pet is a great idea, but doing so involves planes and trucks, fuel, crates, bedding and food for the animals travelling. It all adds up!", shares Lynn.

Thank you Lynn and Derrick, for your outstanding commitment and contributions to bring deserving animals into happy homes. This life changing work would not be possible without you!

Don't miss the Campaign Update at the end of this newsletter!



Lynn pictured with a puppy from a Northern community.

The Betty White Challenge

On January 17th, the Betty White Challenge took on a life of its own as people all over the world rallied to honour Betty White on what would have been her 100th Birthday.

The GTHS would like to extend a huge thank you for the incredible support that poured in. **Together, you raised over \$26,000 and counting for pets and people in this community!** Betty would have been so proud! Funding will go directly toward animal care and wellness supplies.



Betty White with her dogs.

Pets Offer Hope to Youth Struggling with Mental Health

Interaction with animals has a positive impact on the social and emotional development of youth. The Human Animal Bond Research Institute (www.habri.org) states that animals are universally embraced as an essential element to human wellness.

Providing unconditional love and companionship, animals alleviate symptoms of depression and anxiety. Given that about 1 in 5 adolescents struggle with a mental disorder, the idea that a furry friend can help them has proven to be well worth exploring and building upon.



Evidence shows that youth who care for an animal have stronger social relationships. A recent study from Tufts University reported that caring for a pet can boost teenagers' connections to their communities. The study also found that high levels of attachment to a pet in late adolescence was related with feeling connected to others, feeling empathy, and having more self-confidence.

For 2022, due to an anonymous generous donation, GTHS is able to expand the Humane Education program to provide in person programming to hundreds of local youth. Most important of all, the program passively encourages youth to turn their phones off and do something of value that helps living, breathing organisms, both human and non-human.

Why is this so important? Forbes recently reported that phone addiction and social media addiction are closely intertwined, especially for young people and that this addiction is linked to some serious mental health risks.

A study earlier in 2021 looked at the rise in depression and suicide in teenagers in recent years. It was noted that there has been a rise in both and that girls were particularly at risk: their suicide rate has gone up by 65% in the last five years. The number of girls with severe depression rose by 58%. What's even more significant is that 48% of those who spent five or more hours a day on their phones had thought about suicide and had made plans for it vs. 28% of those who spent only one hour per day on their phones. No other variables – things like household financial issues, homework, or school pressure – could account for the rise in mental health issues over that five-year period.

The GTHS Humane Education Program has been proven to assist participants in their ability to tackle these challenges through increased social and emotional skills such as responsibility, respect, and compassion. It is important to note that this project was piloted by GTHS and is a front runner in humane education across the country.

Friends for Life: Dianne & Daisy



Dianne Rinehart and Daisy. Photograph courtesy of Roger Klein.

When Dianne Rinehart moved from the city to Collingwood in 2020, she was excited to explore the area and make great new friends. She was not expecting, however, for one of those friends to have four legs and a tail.

Dianne adopted Daisy, a black and white Northern puppy, from the GTHS on February 26th, 2021. After months of waiting, a very deserving dog and a very deserving person found each other. While Daisy waited in foster care, Dianne was glued to the GTHS website, and with encouragement from GTHS staff, waited for her new best friend.

Dianne describes Daisy as a gift. After her marriage had collapsed, Daisy became Dianne's constant companion, always making sure they stuck to their routines. Rain or shine, Daisy and Dianne walk three times a day, with Daisy often leading Dianne down paths they've never walked before. With a smile on her face and a wag of her tail, Daisy draws everyone in, introducing Dianne to people she wouldn't normally meet.

Her gentle, loving, and encouraging nature is a constant inspiration to Dianne, who has learned to see the best in every day because of Daisy. With Daisy by her side, Dianne never feels alone. Thank you, Dianne, for choosing to adopt from the GTHS.

February Donor Highlight: Willa Napier

Willa Napier is a longtime donor, volunteer, and friend to the GTHS, investing in the hospital and animal care programs.

Willa first became involved with animal charity work in 1990, crediting her deep love of animals and her belief in the importance of community-based animal care services. Since then, she has helped the GTHS thrive, participating in numerous fundraising campaigns and volunteering with events such as the Furball Gala.

When the Regional Centre for Pets and People campaign launched late last year, Willa demonstrated her incredible generosity yet again by naming the Adoption Greeting Room. When asked what motivated her to give, she shared, *"the current location is much too small and certainly needs to expand. The area has grown so much in the past 5 years that something has to be done. The new facility will allow a greater expansion of services which will be of great benefit to everyone involved."*

The GTHS team would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to Willa for her endless support and for her investment in the future of the organization.



Willa and her dog Beacon on adoption day.

Meet the GTHS Board of Directors: Monika Merz

Monika Merz has always had a soft spot for animals. When she was a child, she would often bring home stray cats, never wanting to leave anyone out in the cold. Thankfully, her animal-loving family didn't mind.

As an adult, Monika continued to help animals in any way she could; from providing food to a cat colony found at the top of the mountain, to donating to small, grassroots animal charities, and eventually contributing to the construction of the current GTHS Animal Centre.

Monika is an incredible advocate for keeping pets with people whenever possible, believing strongly in the remarkable power of the human-animal bond on emotional wellness, particularly for those who are ageing. She has experienced this bond personally, and has seen how animal companionship affects others.

“One day, my mother who frequented the farmer’s market in their community brought home a small, black kitten. She missed having a pet. Despite my father’s protests, the little black kitten, Louie, secured a place in my father’s heart and they became inseparable. My father lived to be just over 100, and my mother claimed that Louie contributed to his longevity.”

–Monika Merz

Today, as a volunteer, donor, and Board Member, Monika is committed to ensuring that homeless animals continue to receive care and shelter, and vulnerable community members are supported through innovative programs and services.

“To continue to provide essential services to a rapidly growing community in the Georgian Bay area, the shelter must move to a bigger facility as the current shelter cannot accommodate this growth. This will ensure that the GTHS can continue to meet the needs of all pet owners, help children and the community, and help those who through ageing must give up their pets.”

Thank you, Monika, for your dedication to the GTHS and your inspiring compassion for pets and people.

Did you know the GTHS has
11 hard-working board
members?
Meet the team by visiting
GTHS.ca



Monika Merz.

From Hope to Home

The GTHS is running out of room. The current animal centre was built to house 500 animals. In 2021, the GTHS saw 1,400 animals pass through its doors. Cats are spilling into the hallways, and dogs are kept in crates in the garage. The building is bursting at the seams. **The GTHS is running out of time.** Rapid population growth and the COVID-19 pandemic has put enormous strain on underserved members of the community. Over the last two years, the GTHS has seen a 131% increase in the need for pet pantry services, and a 40% increase in the need for emergency boarding services.

Last year, the GTHS launched a capital campaign with the goal of raising funds to build a much-needed animal care and community-focused centre. Years in the making, the launch of this campaign is the culmination of hard work, collaboration, unyielding hope and represents a pivotal moment in GTHS history.

The campaign got off to a phenomenal start in 2021 thanks to donations from GTHS family. Board members, volunteers, donors, and staff contributed a total of **\$2,217,974 in pledges** towards the campaign last year—that's 17 % of the fundraising goal of \$14 million! The team are looking forward to continuing this progress with the Quiet Phase of fundraising, which will run for the remainder of this year and into 2023.

The GTHS team are deeply grateful to the volunteers who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes, ensuring the campaign's success. This progress could not have been achieved without the expertise of the Campaign Cabinet, the enthusiasm of the campaign ambassadors, and the guidance of the Building Committee.

In 2025, the Regional Centre for Pets and People will open its doors. The centre will provide advanced medical care and shelter to animals in need. It will place more animals into safe, loving homes. Accessible, community-focused programs will provide hope and safety to vulnerable members of the community. At-risk youth will find purpose and belonging through educational programming and volunteer opportunities. The centre will be an **essential community resource**, offering safety, comfort, and warmth: a home to both pets and people of the community.

If you would like to learn more about the campaign, contact Kelly, Campaign Manager, at kelly@gths.ca.

Welcome, Kelly O'Neil

The GTHS is thrilled to welcome Kelly O'Neil as Campaign Manager!

Kelly has extensive experience in fundraising and communications and has contributed tremendously to the success of the GTHS over the past three years as Donor Relations Specialist. As Campaign Manager, Kelly will provide leadership and support to the Cabinet and staff team as they work to meet fundraising goals this year.

You can reach Kelly at 705-445-5204 ext. 224 or by email at kelly@gths.ca.



Kelly in the GTHS main cat room.

Meet the Cabinet: Kelly Glass & Derrick March



Kelly, Derrick, and Chewi.

The GTHS is proud to introduce Kelly Glass and Derrick March, Campaign Cabinet Co-Chairs.

Kelly has over twenty-five years of experience coaching and advising leaders in her capacity as a Human Resources Executive and Coach. Her family adopted their beloved dog, Burton, from the GTHS and have opened their home to many animals in need of foster care. Having witnessed firsthand the incredible power of the human-animal bond, Kelly believes strongly in the undeniable value of this project for the emotional health of vulnerable youth and the wellbeing of senior members of the community. In her spare time, Kelly soaks up all the south Georgian Bay region has to offer through hiking, golfing, and cycling.

Derrick is currently a senior Vice President of Business Development at Canada Life, having spent his entire career in the financial services industry. Derrick and his family are avid animal lovers, benefiting daily from the unconditional love of their four dogs and two cats. He and his family have volunteered with the GTHS for many years, providing love and care for animals until they are ready for adoption. As an active member of his community, Derrick is incredibly proud to support a project which will provide care and shelter to animals, support vulnerable pets, and enhance community wellness through accessible programs and services. When he's not busy playing with foster puppies, Derrick enjoys cycling, golfing, and exploring the outdoors with his dogs.

Thank You!

Thank you for supporting the Georgian Triangle Humane Society.



Happy Tails Hazy Session Ale.



Beer launch event at Collingwood Brewery.



Volunteer holiday party.



GTHS team member Erika with a kitten.



GTHS team member Molly delivering a Pet Break session.



Rendering of the future Regional Centre for Pets & People.



Registered Charity Number is 868004185 RR0001

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