



Transforming the lives of animals and people through partnerships, protection and hope

We Found Everything in Pez, Except Candy

Pez is an affectionate, 7-year-old calico who came to us as a stray. Our staff noted that she wasn't eating much and she was starting to lose weight. When Director of Veterinary Services Dr. Holly Baker checked her out, she felt a mass in Pez's tummy.

Through an exploratory surgery, Dr. Holly found an alien-looking mass made up of 19 hair bands, a plastic bag, tape, pieces of rubber and a zip tie. Pez was adopted with advice to her new family that is a good reminder to all pet parents: keep small, tempting objects that can be swallowed out of reach.

We're extremely fortunate to have in-house veterinary staff to perform lifesaving surgeries like this whenever the need arises. We couldn't do it without your support.



This was the mass of material causing an intestinal blockage in Pez.



“More than I Expected”

Laura Gray kept seeing social media posts from shelters across the country desperate for space and in need of foster homes. “I couldn't stand the thought of not doing something, especially if it meant helping someone with the sweetness of my own dog, Remsen,” she said.

In January she reached out to MHHS and started fostering. She knew that her MHHS alum Remsen's great temperament would be perfect for helping shy dogs. She recalls her first foster pup being too afraid to come out of her crate at the shelter. But when she entered Laura's home, she immediately relaxed.

“It's mutually beneficial,” notes Laura. “Fostering frees up space in the shelter to help another dog and I feel like I'm doing something good. I think Remsen knows the dogs need his help, too. It's even more rewarding than I expected.”

To learn more about becoming a foster volunteer, visit mohawkhumane.org/fostering.



Volunteer Laura Gray with her third foster pup, Bing.

A Message from CEO Ashley Jeffrey Bouck



I come face to face with the importance of our work when I have a moment with a great dog like Tofu. She's not even 2 years old and came to us last October as a stray. She benefited from work with our behavior team and also had hip surgery with us. We want to make sure she can fully enjoy her life when she goes home.

With every resource stretched to the limit, we are always evaluating our capacity. While we can't create more physical space within the shelter, we can innovate to build capacity in other ways with the support of so many facets of our caring community behind us. Here are some examples:

Our incredible volunteers have come forward to help in every single aspect of our work, including dog walking, cat care, cleaning, helping our community relations team and more. Last year they logged over 21,800 hours.

Every day our team rises to every challenge. In 2022 Placement Manager Jillian Leibach increased our foster program by 21%, which meant 770 animals were placed in 69 foster homes. Volunteers like Laura Gray (on the cover) are helping us not only to manage a shortage of kennel space, but also giving animals who need it most a little extra TLC in a home environment.

Our veterinary team performed 2,650 spay and neuter surgeries last year. On top of that, they routinely provided a host of other operations on a regular basis, like the abdominal surgery that saved Pez's life. Pets like Olive (page 3) came to us in what some of our staff called "the worst condition of emaciation we have ever seen." She's a sweet girl and she's getting all the care and love she needs, but medically she is still not out of the woods.

As our kennels become more full of strays and animals from cruelty and neglect cases, we are caring for more dogs who need more intensive medical and behavioral care.

These animals bring the greatest heartbreak when they arrive injured, terrified and emotionally shut down. Yet they also provide the greatest joy when, having been healed and nurtured by our staff and volunteers, they begin to trust and enjoy life, and finally go on to loving homes.

We continue to build networks to receive and give support, as we all struggle with the same challenges.

We will continue to build capacity in every way possible.

And we will continue to share our challenges, successes and gratitude with you.

Sincerely,



This is Gigi, another abandoned dog, with her new best friend. These dogs deserve all we have to give them and they'll give us so much in return. Her family says she's perfect.

Number of Homeless Dogs and their Needs are Increasing

There is a perfect storm brewing in animal welfare, resulting in more homeless animals across the nation and here in the Capital Region. It's a combination of rising costs for pet care, evictions, lack of affordable pet-friendly housing, and the veterinary shortage. The result is more abandoned pets.

MHHS is in the eye of that storm and at the end of 2022 we made the hard decision to end municipal housing contracts with all but those with the largest stray populations. The goal was to continue to help our local communities in greatest need, while curbing what had become an increasingly unsafe practice of operating over capacity.

Incoming stray dogs are now limited to the cities of Albany, Troy, Schenectady, Watervliet and the town of Colonie. However, the first quarter of 2023 has brought no relief: we have seen a 38% increase in stray and seized dogs. At the same time, dog adoptions are down by 26%.

First Quarter Dog Intake and Adoptions			
	2023	2022	Change
Stray/Seized Dog Intake	247	178	+38.8%
Dog Adoptions	155	208	-25.5%

As MHHS increases its humane law enforcement efforts, the good news is that we are rescuing more animals from abuse and neglect. Thanks to our law enforcement partners, more arrests are being made.

However, the challenge of the types of dogs who need our help most is two-fold. Many strays need more time and attention from our Behavior and Enrichment team. Animals from cruelty cases often require medical care for long periods of time.

Up to this point, we've had the luxury of giving these animals all the time they need and every opportunity they deserve to find a loving home.



Olive came to us in January. Her severe neglect resulted in a felony animal cruelty conviction for her former owner. Olive is slowly improving and remains in our care.

Time and space are the greatest challenges we are now facing and we're seeking new ways to solve them. The bottom line is this: we cannot meet our region's increasing need alone.

We are grateful to our adopters, volunteers and supporters who stand beside us as we navigate new norms. We have you to thank for every life we transform.



A recent cruelty case brought 15 dogs into our care. Senior VP for Operations and Peace Officer Gail Hughes-Morey removes a dog that was living amid drug paraphernalia, trash and feces.

Happy Tails



See more stories at mohawkhumane.org/happy-tails.



Cedar

We absolutely love and adore him.

- Charnelle J.



Wishbone

We are so thankful for Wishbone!

- Jane P. and Sean B.



Sadie

She was meant for us and we can't thank you enough.

- Amy J.



Chip

He's enjoying snuggles, kisses, treats, walks and more snuggles.

- Sarah M.



Lion-O

He's a perfect match for us and we're spoiling him.

- Sherrie N.



Quincy

He is such a wonderful addition and fits right in!

- Alyssa C.



Mason

He's now a Canine Good Citizen!

- Alissa J.



Farquaad

Thanks for letting us adopt this little bundle of love.

- Oteria L.

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it's all about the pets

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