

WINTER NEWSLETTER



Big wins, new faces, and what's to come for the HSOW

From record-breaking rescues and lifesaving spay/neuter numbers to new board members, community partnerships, and exciting upcoming events, this winter edition of the HSOW newsletter is packed with updates that show just how much your support makes possible. Below, you'll find our biggest 2025 highlights, ways to get involved, and a look ahead at what's coming next for animals in Wilkes County.



2025 TOP RESCUE GROUP

The Humane Society of Wilkes was recognized by Wilkes County Animal Services (WCAS) as their Top Rescue Group for 2025. Presenting the plaque at the January 6, 2026, County Commissioners meeting, WCAS Director Bruce Johnson said, “We just want to show them that we appreciate all of their hard work and really thank them for it.”

Shelter manager Mark Bowers added, “They’re on call all the time. I can text Katie (Parsons, Humane Society of Wilkes Foster-Adoption Committee chair) and say, ‘Hey, I’ve got some orphaned kittens here, and she comes and gets them. They do extraordinary work for us and need recognition” (“Humane Society of Wilkes receives award,” Wilkes Journal Patriot, Jan. 11, 2026).



In 2025, the HSOW Foster-Adoption team pulled 701 pets from the Wilkes County Animal Shelter! Our current foster homes include Katie Parsons (chair, Foster-Adoption Committee), Julian Shumate, Jennifer Mathies, Mary Parsons, Bettye & Ron Alvis, Lauren Johnson, Laura Parker, Denise Greene, John & Licia Rogers, Elizabeth Royal, Molly Wood, Robin Marth, Tammy Celestini, Robin Eastridge, Lara Eastridge, Amanda Duffield, Chloe Shew, Tracy Turner, Mary Elmore, and Blair Hancock. ([Intake, adoption, and euthanasia rates at the Wilkes County Animal Shelter and other NC shelters can be found here.](#))



2025 ANNUAL MEETING

We held our annual meeting on Tuesday, November 11, 2025, at Dom's Bakery and Pizzeria in N. Wilkesboro. Over 30 members attended, enjoying the company of their fellow animal lovers and the good food! As has become our tradition, thanks to VP Alison Collins, we also indulged in another beautiful and delicious HSOW cake made by the bakers at Dom's!



President Ed Parsons led the meeting which included board and nominating committee elections. Each HSOW program chair reported on their progress for 2025 and drawings for lots of great door prizes were held.



Three new HSOW Board Members were elected at the November 11, 2025, annual meeting: Leah Bishop, Tom Silvey, and Lori Todd.

You can find more information about each of our new members in our last Fall newsletter on our [website here](#).

Our returning board members are Ed Parsons, Alison Collins, Mary Elmore, Sherrie Sentell, Susan Allen, Matt Black, Blair Hancock, Kim Hatfield (re-elected for 2026-2028), and Julian Shumate.

2026 board officers were elected at the January board meeting:

- **Ed Parsons, President**
- **Alison Collins, Vice President**
- **Sherrie Sentell, Treasurer**
- **Mary Elmore, Secretary**
- **Leah Bishop, Public Relations**



25 YEAR CLUB & MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Congratulations and thank you to this year's additions to the "Twenty-Five Year" membership club!

These folks have been family members of the HSOW for 25 consecutive years.

- **Karen & Billy McElwee**
- **Carl & Brenda Page**
- **John & Ann Willardson**

Membership renewal fees are due

Due to the loss of our former membership chair Mitzi Combs, we are concerned that some members who relied upon her reminders may not have renewed their membership. If you are not sure when your membership expires/expired, please email **Blair** at blair.hancock@humanesocietyofwilkes.org and we'll figure it out. If you prefer to mail your membership form, you can download it from the web site, pick one up at the building, or email Blair and she'll send one to you.

If you have changed your email address, phone number, or address, please let us know. We currently depend on email to get information to you about our activities and accomplishments. We don't send many group messages—usually no more than

one a month –so if you are not seeing our emails, please send your current email address to Blair or to info@humanesocietyofwilkes.org.



UPCOMING EVENTS



[HSOW Foster Pet Adoption Fair](#)

Saturday, February 21, 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. PetSmart, Wilkesboro, NC





SNAP MOBILE



Bringing low-cost
spay/neuter
to Wilkes County!

Limit 2 cats, 2 dogs, or 1 of each

Under
40 lbs

Over 4
months old

Under 6
years old

No smush
face breeds

SNAP Mobile Clinic

The next SNAP Mobile clinic for low-income pet owners will be held on Monday, March 2, 2026. Please visit our website for more information about application and registration.

[MORE INFO](#)

Regular SNAP Registration for low-income pet-owners who have appointments to take their pets to Wilkes Veterinary Hospital or Riverview Animal Hospital: Friday, February 6, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at the HSOW building at Hidden Oaks Dog Park, Cub Creek Park.



HSOW BINGO!

Friday, March 13, 6-8:30 PM, Central Wilkes Middle School Cafeteria. 3541 S. NC Hwy 16, Moravian Falls, NC 28654

Contact us at info@humanesocietyofwilkes.org if you would like to volunteer for any events!



UPDATES & SHOUT OUTS

Director Resignation

We regret to announce that our new director Alison Crisp, whom we hired last November, submitted her resignation in early January, citing a need to return to full-time employment. In her short tenure, Alison contributed much to our organization, particularly helping us with our strategic plan. The HSOW board will be discussing the position description and reposting it in the near future. If our efforts to purchase the former Wells-Fargo building in N. Wilkesboro are successful, we may soon be looking for a full-time director/shelter manager. Anyone interested in the position should check Indeed.com in February or March.

HSOW Giving Tree



At our December 2025 Pet Adoption Fair at PetSmart, we set up our first “Giving Tree,” offering people an opportunity to select, purchase, and donate supplies to help our foster pets and foster homes. PetSmart customers could choose tags for pet food, litter, and other supplies from the tree, then put their purchases in a special bin at the front of the store. It was a big success! Special thanks to Leah Bishop for the design and set up of the tree and to PetSmart for allowing us to keep the tree up through the holidays. And of course, extra special thanks to all those who donated!

Animal Lovers NC License Tag Supports Spay/Neuter



Did you know that your choice of license plate can help get Wilkes County dogs and cats spayed/neutered?

When you renew your registration on the [DMV website](#) click on Specialized Plates and search for “Animal Lovers.” \$20 from each plate will go to the Spay Neuter Program administered by the Dept. of Agriculture. The HSOW Spay-Neuter

Assistance Program (SNAP), along with similar programs across the state, applies for funding from this program to help low-income pet owners get their pets fixed.



Wanted: Clumping, Non-Clumping, and Pellet Cat Litter

With an average of 40-50 cats and kittens in foster care most of the time, you know we have to deal with lots of kitty poop! We are always struggling to keep cat litter in stock. We know that cat litter doesn't feel quite as good as sending puppy and kitten food or toys; however, it is usually our most pressing need. We get many generous donations from our members and other supporters, and it feels a little uncomfortable to always be asking for more and more—but we have to have it! We do use most of the Chewy gift cards that are donated for litter, and we order it when we need to. So send those bags, boxes, and tubs of litter our way! Thank you! (Oh, and we're still very happy to get adult and puppy/kitten pet food!)

[Amazon Wishlist](#)

[Chewy Wishlist](#)

[Cash Donations](#)

Checks: HSOW, P O Box 306, N. Wilkesboro, NC 28659.

You're always welcome to drop donations into the brown plastic box to the left of the front door of our building at the Hidden Oaks Dog Park in Cub Creek Park, as well. It's best not to send packages to the building because it is not an approved delivery address. Chewy and Amazon deliveries are sent to the homes of board members.



2025 Annual Data Report

Foster-Adoption Program – 781 total adoptions

- 381 cats adopted
- 395 dogs adopted
- 4 other pets adopted
- 248 pets transferred to other rescues

701 of these pets were pulled from the Wilkes County Animal Shelter in 2025, helping to reduce the county euthanasia rates.

Spay-Neuter Assistance Program (SNAP)

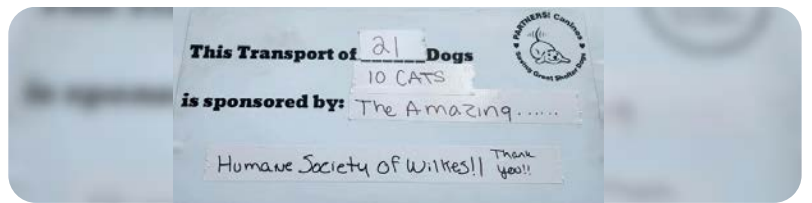
324 Vouchers were issued for reduced cost spay/neuter surgery for pets in low-income households.

- 190 cat vouchers
- 134 dog vouchers

Community Cats/TNR Program

425 community or feral cats fixed and returned or rescued

Partners! Canines Transports



The HSOW has often worked with a sister rescue group Partners! Canines to help get homeless pets from the Wilkes County Animal Shelter that we cannot foster to no-kill shelters in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New York. On November 19th, we sponsored a Partners! Transport using funds from a generous donation from one of our members/adopters. The more we work together, the more animals we save! For more information about Partners! Canines, visit their [Facebook page](#) or [Website](#).

Grateful for Our Community Donors!

These are just a few of the donations we received from community members recently. Thank you to all the folks who have left things in our donation box at the building or sent supplies to us from our Amazon and Chewy wish lists! Anything we can't use for our fosters gets passed on to community pet owners in need. Every donation helps the animals of Wilkes County!



Thank you to the East Wilkes Middle School Beta Club for your generous donations to our foster pets!



Thank you Carrie Lynn, Greg, and their friends for thinking of the HSOW animals for the holidays. They will love all the treats and the toys you brought for them—and so will their foster homes!

New Members Oct 2025–Jan 2026

Welcome to our new members who joined between October 2025 and January 2026. We are also very grateful to all of you who have renewed your membership!

- Brenda Combs
- Lindsey Ivey
- Alison Williams

Donors Oct 2025–Jan 2026

Thank You to Our Generous Donors!

In the link below is a list of those who have made financial donations to the Humane Society of Wilkes between October 2025 and January 2026. Special thanks also go to all those who donated in these other ways: our Amazon and Chewy wish lists, collection jars and boxes, merchandise purchases and participation at fundraising

P.O. Box 306, North Wilkesboro, NC 28659

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Happy Tails Highlights

Click the name of each pet to read how they are doing!



PONGO



BLUEY



SOPHIE



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