
Best Friends Animal Society

2023 Annual Report



**Best
Friends®**
Save Them All®

Domineo

Letter from the board

The past year for Best Friends was filled with many notable accomplishments and significant “firsts” in advancements toward our organizational goal of leading the country to no-kill in 2025.

The idea of putting your organization on the line for a specific and very significant milestone in our mission to “bring about a time when there are no more homeless pets” is in itself notable because it is so out of the norm for cause-related organizations to hold themselves publicly accountable in such a way. It’s akin to Babe Ruth’s legendary “called shot” in the third game of the 1932 World Series — when, with the game tied in the fourth inning and the count two balls and two strikes, he pointed to the center field stands and belted the next pitch for a home run right to where he had pointed!

If we don’t hold ourselves accountable to specific goals, then we would be doing a disservice to our supporters and, most importantly, to the animals whom we have stepped forward to serve. Unfocused, generic good works for the animals are important and make a difference in the lives of many creatures. But Best Friends has chosen a specific path with a very narrow focus because the killing of our best friends in America’s shelters has gone on for too long and it must stop. Unlike “the Bambino,” we aren’t playing a game. Lives are on the line, and time is of the essence.

At our 2016 Best Friends National Conference, Julie Castle, not yet in her role as CEO (that would come about two years later), planted a stake in the ground to work with our partner organizations across the country to end the killing of healthy and treatable pets in shelters regardless of age or appearance.

The no-kill philosophy and the accompanying vision for the country expressed in our 2025 campaign was the organizing principle of the founders of Best Friends in 1984. The lives of all animals have intrinsic value, quite independent of any utility they might hold for us. Respecting that value and dedicating ourselves to protecting it became job No. 1, beginning with the homeless pets who came into our orbit and expanding to an organizational mission and, from there, a national movement.

Neither I nor my co-founders could have ever imagined how that simple idea would galvanize the intuitive understanding and feelings of millions of animal lovers the world over. But that is the way of common sense — everyone understands it when someone finally says it.

We are immeasurably grateful to you for joining us on this journey. I hope the information in this annual report will inspire you as it does me, and I know that our staff is here to expand on any topics and to answer any questions you may have.

Kind regards,



Francis Battista
Co-founder, Board Chair
Best Friends Animal Society

Salsa



Best Friends Animal Sanctuary

As the heart of the no-kill movement, Best Friends Animal Sanctuary embodies the love and care every pet deserves. While providing a home-between-homes for up to 1,600 animals on any given day, we're constantly finding new ways to save and improve their lives, including using cutting-edge technologies that enable us to save those who previously weren't possible to save.

In addition to all the lifesaving that happens in Angel Canyon, the Sanctuary also supports local shelters in their efforts to reach no-kill and bolsters Best Friends' commitment to ending the killing of dogs and cats in America's shelters. And you fuel every aspect of this work.

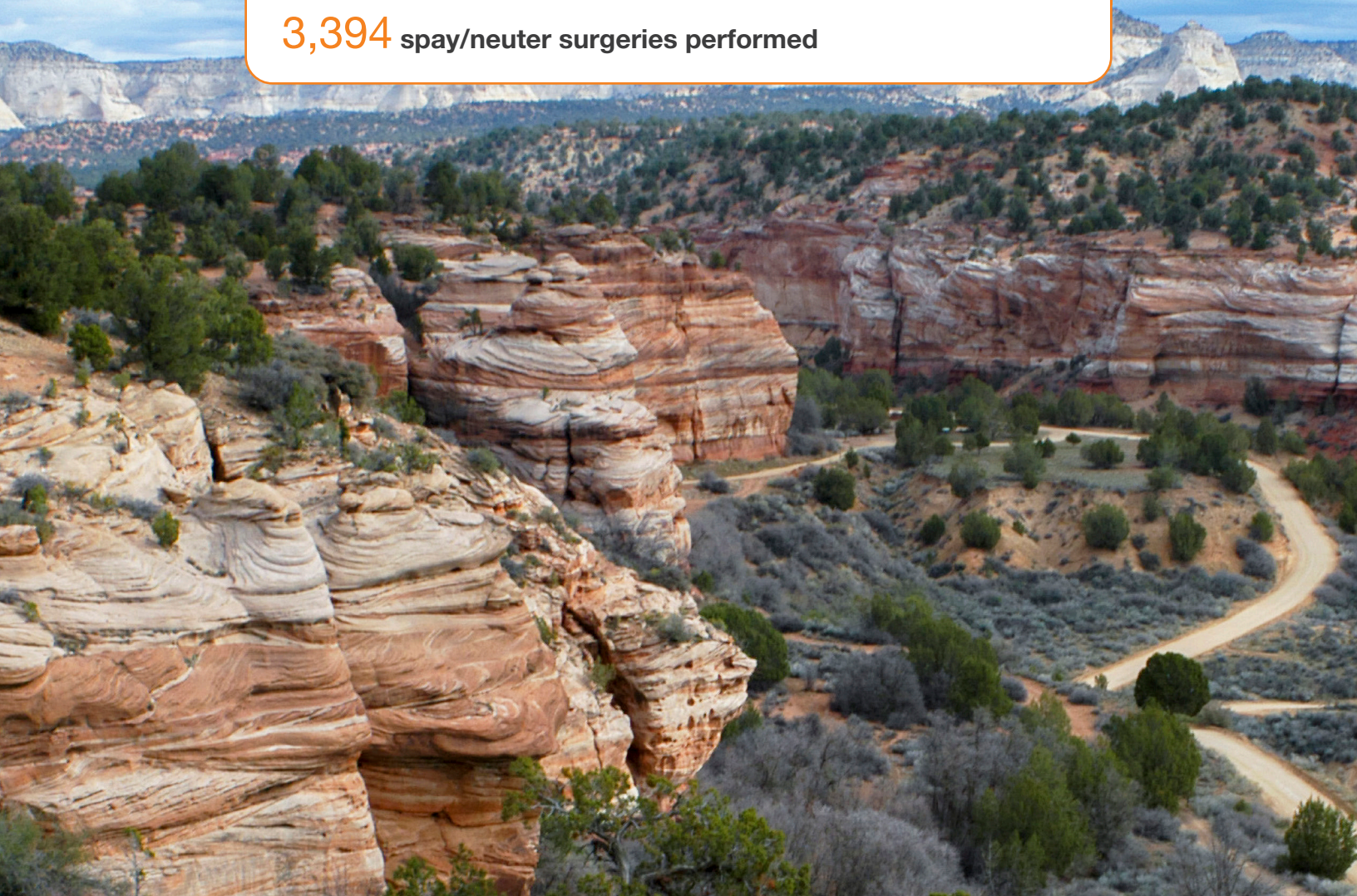
BY THE NUMBERS

FISCAL YEAR 2023 AT THE SANCTUARY

2,963 animals welcomed **1,712** animals transported

894 animals fostered **1,594** animals adopted

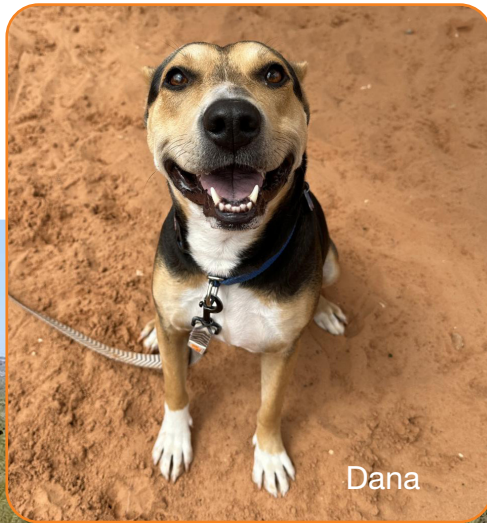
3,394 spay/neuter surgeries performed



New digs for dogs

Dogs with behavior challenges are among the animals most at risk of being killed in our nation's shelters. Through a generous grant from the Shipley Foundation, the Shipley Dog Lodges, a new state-of-the-art complex, are allowing Best Friends to safely and effectively innovate and model how to care for and train dogs with behavior challenges. The goal: to place these dogs into loving homes more quickly than ever before.

Dana was one of the first group of dogs to move into the new digs in September. Designed with dogs like her in mind, the Shipley Dog Lodges help limit her exposure to things that upset her. For Dana, that's other dogs. She's reactive to them, especially when she's walking on a leash. But here, she's already making huge strides and even romping with other dogs in playgroups! When she's not working hard at her training and socialization, she enjoys sunbathing and dressing up like a princess.





Jasmine

Helping the herd

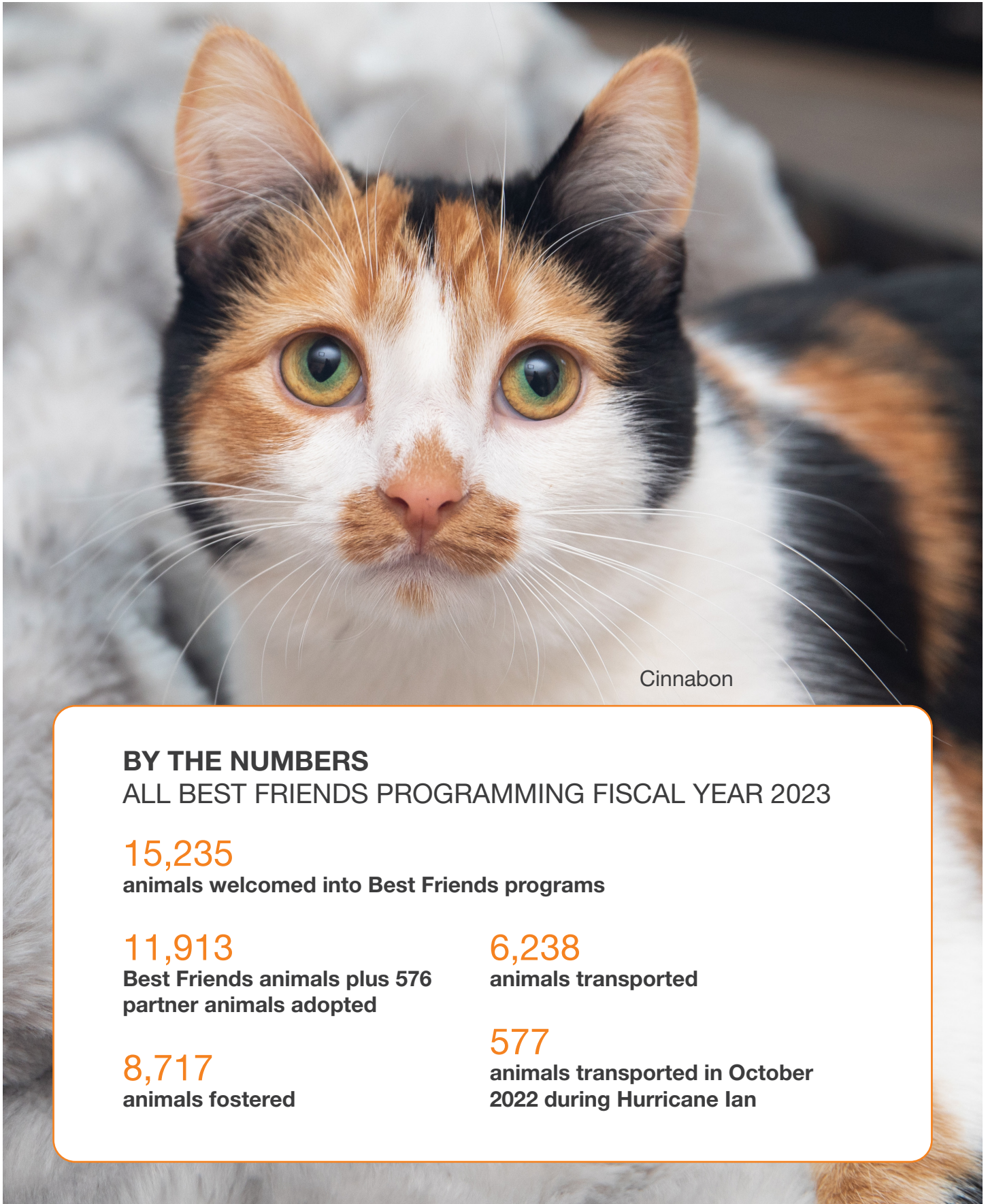
When 20 horses, 10 goats, two donkeys, and a sheep — many little more than skin and bone — all needed a place to go, the Sanctuary was there to help. When they arrived at their new digs, most were not only hungry but also wary of people. Despite their terrible condition, all but two would survive and recover with expert care at Horse Haven.

Life started to look up as the large herd grew stronger and healthier every day. A mama goat and her kid went home first, and then a pony was adopted by a family with children who adore her. Two of the goats, along with the sheep, got a nice home on 10 acres of land. By the end of the year, 18 of the animals had found homes.



Gizelle

Saving lives around the country



Cinnabon

BY THE NUMBERS

ALL BEST FRIENDS PROGRAMMING FISCAL YEAR 2023

15,235

animals welcomed into Best Friends programs

11,913

Best Friends animals plus 576
partner animals adopted

6,238

animals transported

8,717

animals fostered

577

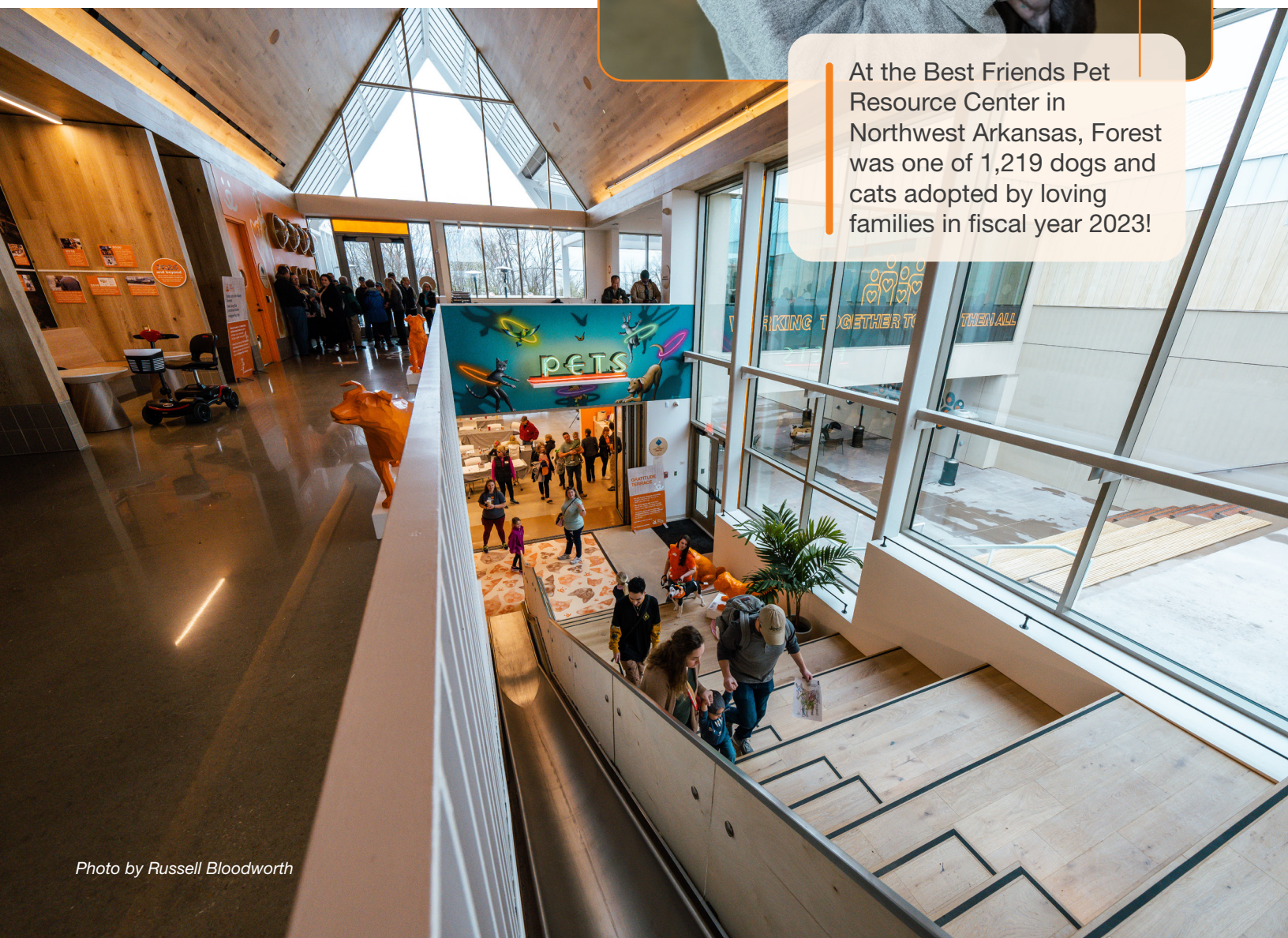
animals transported in October
2022 during Hurricane Ian

In addition to the Sanctuary, Best Friends has lifesaving centers and programs in Atlanta, Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, Northwest Arkansas, and Salt Lake City. We've become more innovative across all our centers and programs to help dogs and cats find loving homes.

In March, thanks to you, we celebrated the grand opening of the Best Friends Pet Resource Center in Bentonville, Arkansas. As the first-of-its-kind, modernized animal shelter in the country, it's showing communities around the nation what's possible when people are invited to help drive lifesaving.



At the Best Friends Pet Resource Center in Northwest Arkansas, Forest was one of 1,219 dogs and cats adopted by loving families in fiscal year 2023!





Breaking records

Collaborating with our shelter partners like Animal Care Centers of New York City to take in and place their pets in new homes is one way Best Friends is working toward no-kill nationwide. This past summer, New Yorkers came out in droves to support that effort. Many days, people were lined up before the doors opened to Best Friends' New York City lifesaving center, ready to meet and go home with a new pet. The Best Friends team, along with our valued volunteers, worked to make the adoption process easy, to talk with people whose preferred language is Spanish, to waive adoption fees, and to help match people with the right pet for them. The community turned August into a record-breaking month for the center, with 284 dogs and cats finding new homes.

Rescued pup becomes boys' best bud

Potato is a blocky-headed pooch with a huge personality and a gigantic smile. But his exuberance, plus the fact that he had heartworm disease, turned potential adopters away at a Houston shelter. So Potato came to Best Friends for a fresh start.

First, Potato went to a Best Friends foster home that saw him through his heartworm treatment. Once he'd healed physically, the Best Friends team placed him with a trainer who could help with his behavior. It turns out that Potato's winning combination is lots of physical activity plus exercises that help him learn to control his impulses.

Just when things started to look up for Potato, life threw him one more hurdle. He swallowed part of a dog toy, which led to an intestinal blockage and emergency surgery. Fortunately, Potato sailed through the surgery. As soon as he recovered, he landed in a home with two young boys. Now, Potato puts his boundless energy to good use following the kids around.



Helping shelters

Your support means that more shelters get the help they need to save lives. Whether shelters need a lifeline or just a little boost to get to no-kill, Best Friends offers an array of lifesaving programming and tools. From our shelter collaborative program, which focuses on peer-to-peer mentoring, to a new data visualization tool, these programs and initiatives save lives now and make it possible to sustain lifesaving gains into the future.



Launching a new shelter program

As organizations increase lifesaving, animals with medical issues start to make up more of their shelter population. Saving those animals depends on the availability of and immediate access to quality veterinary care. Thanks to you, in 2023, we launched the national shelter medicine program to increase lifesaving by assessing and improving the veterinary and wellness care animals in shelters receive. The program team, headed by Best Friends' director of national veterinary programs, Dr. Erin Katribe, works both on-site and virtually with shelters, teaching things such as high-quality, high-volume spay/neuter surgeries; disease prevention and outbreak response; and ways to make existing veterinary programs more efficient.

This year, the program provided:



972

surgeries to Houston-area pets in shelters and Best Friends animals



38

virtual outbreak consultations and six on-site outbreak responses



14

on-site shelter medicine consultations and program support (non-outbreak related) and seven remote consultations

BY THE NUMBERS HELPING SHELTERS

4,400+

Best Friends Network Partners were given resources and tools to save more lives.

\$13,628,102

in Best Friends funding was provided to 3,135 organizations. \$1,250,000 additional funds were granted to 45 network partners through Rachael Ray Save Them All and No-Kill Excellence Grants.

\$1.08 million

worth of in-kind pet food and kitty litter was given by Best Friends to animal welfare organizations throughout the country.

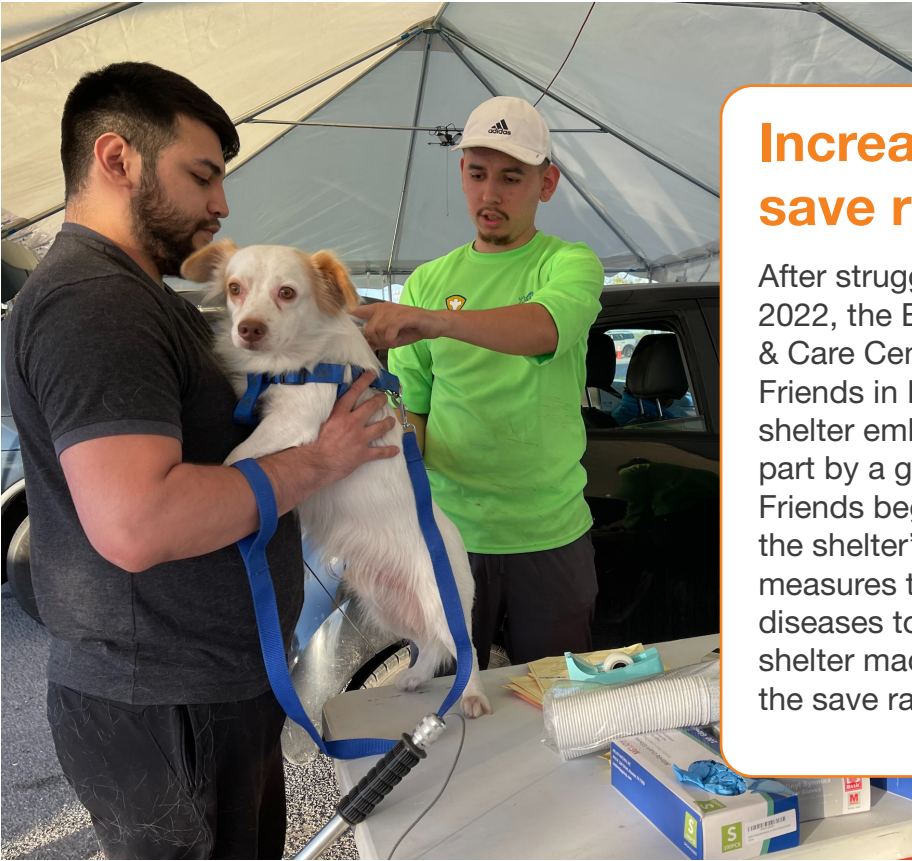
90

shelter partners were mentored by their peers through Best Friends' Prince and Paws Shelter Collaborative Program. Named after the beloved adopted pets of its lead investor, the program pairs shelters that aren't yet no-kill (fellows) with no-kill groups (mentors) that can help them save more lives.

Nearly 1.7 million

pets were represented by data collected in Shelter Pet Data Alliance, Best Friends' new data and analytics platform.



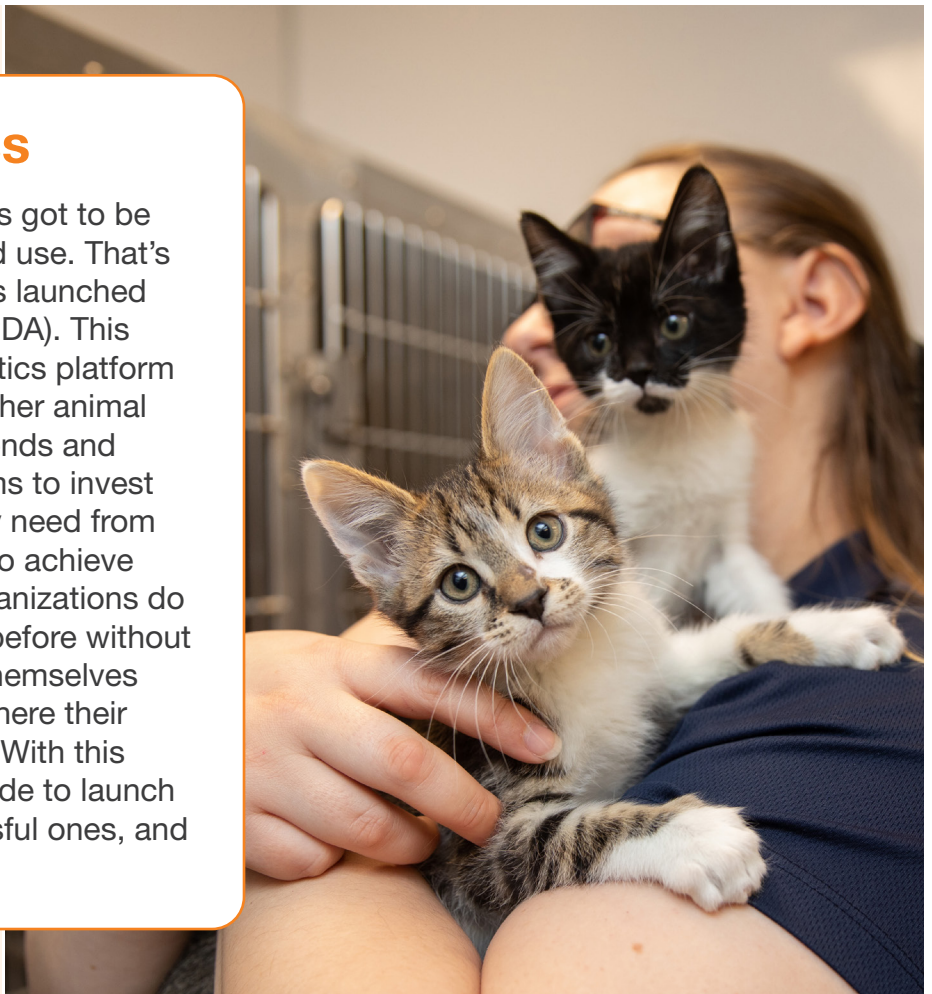


Increasing Brownsville's save rate

After struggling with a 26% save rate in 2022, the Brownsville Animal Regulation & Care Center started working with Best Friends in May 2023. Through the national shelter embed program, made possible in part by a grant from Maddie's Fund®, Best Friends began working side by side with the shelter's leadership and staff. From measures to cut down on the spread of diseases to extending adoption hours, the shelter made several changes that increased the save rate to 75% in September.

Visualizing success

For data to make a difference, it's got to be easy to analyze, understand, and use. That's why, with your help, Best Friends launched the Shelter Pet Data Alliance (SPDA). This highly visual new data and analytics platform makes it easy for shelters and other animal welfare organizations to track trends and successes, decide what programs to invest in, and determine what help they need from Best Friends and/or their peers to achieve greater lifesaving. SPDA lets organizations do something they could never do before without a great deal of effort: compare themselves to their peers to identify areas where their counterparts have had success. With this information, they can better decide to launch new programs, scale up successful ones, and end ineffective programs.



Inspiring adoptions

To inspire more people to adopt a pet from a shelter or rescue group instead of purchasing from a breeder or pet store, Best Friends promoted adoption both nationally and locally.

Three national adoption weekends hosted by Best Friends helped an astounding 30,181 cats and dogs find loving homes. And in the state of Utah, Best Friends piloted a month-long Adopt Local Challenge. Pet lovers were asked to step up by adopting, volunteering, fostering, and promoting their local shelters to their communities. Rescue groups championed shelters on their social media channels to inspire people to support them. As a result, 11 participating shelters saw 612 animals adopted.



Rallying supporters

It takes a collective effort to create kinder communities. Best Friends' legislative team collaborates with lawmakers across the country to pass laws that help animals and oppose or amend those that harm them. Pet lovers like you in every corner of the nation support these efforts by raising their voices — and their hands — to champion animals where they live. As more and more people join this grassroots movement, adding to its collective power every day, what seems impossible becomes increasingly possible.



Granite

Social action saves lives

When shelters are reluctant to accept help from other organizations, social action campaigns can turn things around by driving community demand for change. That's what happened in Weslaco, Texas, where more cats and dogs were being killed at Weslaco Animal Care Services than any other shelter in the state.

Best Friends launched the campaign in February 2023, and the community stepped up, with 630 advocates sending 5,354 emails to Weslaco City Commission members. Weslaco residents also sent nearly 1,000 handwritten postcards to their local

elected officials during a community event, and advocates began making public comments at city commission meetings.

By implementing just some of our recommended lifesaving tactics, the number of animals killed at Weslaco has been reduced by 51%. Public awareness of challenges at the shelter also helped lead to a change in city administration. The new mayor wants to work with Best Friends (and other organizations) to make even more positive changes for animals at the shelter.



BY THE NUMBERS
RALLYING THE PUBLIC

47

**legislative and policy wins across
the country**

101,000+

members on the 2025 Action Team

Floyd



Anemone

A week of action for cats

3,285 people signed up for Best Friends' first-ever National Action Week for Animals. In addition to learning how to effectively approach local government officials, participants took more than 4,250 actions to help community cats during the event. The 2025 Action Team (Best Friends' grassroots advocacy team) also grew to over 100,000 members.

You made the impossible possible in Florida

Since 2012, Best Friends has worked with the Miami Coalition Against Breed Specific Legislation to repeal a pit bull terrier ban in Miami-Dade County. In 2022, Best Friends spearheaded a renewed effort that finally toppled this antiquated breed-specific legislation. Now, for the first time in decades, blocky-headed dogs in Miami-Dade County have a chance to find loving families.



Duke



Macaroni Puppies

New York gets on board

Best Friends worked with supporters and the New York Legislature to enact a bill prohibiting retail puppy mill sales statewide. When signed into law, New York became the sixth state/federal district in the nation with humane pet sales legislation (after California, Maine, Maryland, Washington, and Washington, D.C.). Rather than selling animals from pet mills, retailers will work with shelters and rescue groups to showcase homeless pets for adoption.

Texas for the win

With the help of Best Friends and passionate animal advocates — who sent more than 2,300 messages to legislators — a new law was passed in Texas to stop public housing authorities from restricting dogs based on breed. The new law will help prevent animals from entering shelters when people move into public housing. Best Friends also supported a bill that protects community cat caregivers from being prosecuted for animal cruelty for returning outdoor cats as part of trap-neuter-vaccinate-return programs — the most humane and effective method of controlling outdoor cat populations.



BEST FRIENDS ANIMAL SOCIETY AND SUBSIDIARIES

Consolidated Statements of Financial Position

AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

(WITH COMPARISON TO THE PERIOD AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2022)



Remington

2023 BOARD MEMBERS

Chair: Francis Battista

Vice Chair: Abigail Jones

Treasurer: Lynn Flanders

Secretary: Anne Mejia

Julie Castle, CEO

Gregory Castle, CEO EMERITUS

Denise Clark

Micarl Hill

Cyrus Mejia

Oke Mueller

Lona Williams

Assets	2023	2022
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ -	\$ 4,844,167
Contribution and legacy receivables, net	22,598,337	7,079,765
Prepays and other assets	9,229,674	8,345,261
Investments – general purpose	52,653,706	54,729,419
Cash and cash equivalents – restricted	3,156,861	2,220,183
Investments – restricted:		
Charitable gift annuities	14,926,548	8,796,748
Endowment	7,924,120	7,435,207
Property and equipment, net	87,691,249	70,248,856
Operating lease right-of-use assets	2,137,090	-
Finance lease right-of-use assets	65,342	-
Interest in perpetual trusts and charitable remainder trusts	15,923,464	15,286,355
Total assets	\$216,306,391	\$178,985,961
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$ 14,498,823	\$ 10,953,858
Line of credit	2,834,296	-
Charitable gift annuities	4,463,425	3,715,702
Other liabilities	2,892,101	2,790,986
Operating lease liabilities	2,306,597	-
Finance lease liabilities	68,261	-
Notes payable, net of issuance costs	37,237,322	39,893,394
Total liabilities	64,300,825	57,353,940
Commitments and contingencies		
Net assets:		
Without donor restrictions:		
Undesignated	58,648,976	34,128,811
Designated	57,390,803	51,033,627
	116,039,779	85,162,438
With donor restrictions	35,965,787	36,469,583
Total net assets	152,005,566	121,632,021
Total liabilities and net assets	\$216,306,391	\$178,985,961

“In our opinion, the consolidated financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Organization as of September 30, 2023, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.” – Tanner LLC

BEST FRIENDS ANIMAL SOCIETY AND SUBSIDIARIES

Consolidated Statement of Activities

FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

(WITH SUMMARIZED FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2022)

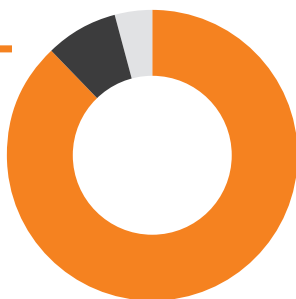
	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	2023 Total	2022 Total
Revenues, support, and reclassifications:				
Contributions of cash and other financial assets	\$ 146,793,713	\$ 18,533,077	\$ 165,326,790	\$ 135,582,666
Contributions of nonfinancial assets	190,459,713	-	190,459,713	100,826,449
Program events	465,355	-	465,355	369,314
Other revenue	5,082,042	-	5,082,042	4,837,405
Net assets released from restrictions	18,134,217	(18,134,217)	-	-
Total revenues, support, and reclassifications	360,935,040	398,860	361,333,900	241,615,834
Expenses:				
Sanctuary activities including animal care (excluding in-kind)	30,899,050	-	30,899,050	28,087,056
In-kind animal food, supplies, medical, and other	2,703,219	-	2,703,219	1,656,114
National and regional programs (excluding in-kind)	72,525,999	2,722,163	75,248,162	59,087,462
In-kind advertising	186,706,146	-	186,706,146	98,481,323
Management and general	12,141,677	285,077	12,426,754	11,109,474
Fundraising	26,314,441	-	26,314,441	22,788,210
Total expenses	331,290,532	3,007,240	334,297,772	221,209,639
Other (income) expenses:				
Other expenses and losses	1,628,089	-	1,628,089	1,411,127
Interest and dividend income, net	(1,998,421)	(52,514)	(2,050,935)	(1,094,324)
Realized and unrealized net investment (gain) loss	(3,708,042)	(2,052,070)	(5,760,112)	19,046,478
Roadhouse hotel and mercantile expenses	2,568,982	-	2,568,982	1,922,795
Net loss on disposal of assets	276,559	-	276,559	57,053
Total other (income) expenses	(1,232,833)	(2,104,584)	(3,337,417)	21,343,129
Total expenses after other (income) expenses	330,057,699	902,656	330,960,355	242,552,768
Increase (decrease) in net assets	30,877,341	(503,796)	30,373,545	(936,934)
Net assets at beginning of the year	85,162,438	36,469,583	121,632,021	122,568,955
Net assets at end of the year	\$ 116,039,779	\$ 35,965,787	\$ 152,005,566	\$ 121,632,021

Complete audited financial statements can be found at bestfriends.org/financial-information.

2023 FROM AUDITED STATEMENT

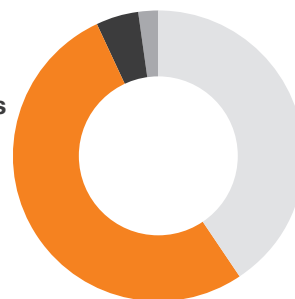
FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

- Programs**
\$295,556,577 (88.4%)
- Fundraising**
\$26,314,441 (7.9%)
- Management & General**
\$12,426,754 (3.7%)



REVENUE

- Donations From Individuals**
\$148,484,517 (41.1%)
- In-Kind Donations**
\$190,459,713 (52.7%)
- Corporate and Foundation Grants**
\$16,842,273 (4.7%)
- Other** \$5,547,397 (1.5%)



Thank you _____

Whether it's preserving trap-neuter-vaccinate-return programs, innovating animal training and care, or helping shelters place more animals in loving homes where they belong, Best Friends and our partners are working relentlessly to create a better future for the animals. But we can't do it without you. You are turning the dream of no-kill nationwide into a reality by making every facet of our work possible. To everyone at Best Friends — and every homeless pet to whom you've given the gift of tomorrow — that means the world. Thank you.

Together, we will Save Them All.



Pepperoni