

THE

# COMPANION

HAPPILY EVER AFTER | SUMMER/FALL 2020

**WILLING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

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Hea





## OUR VISION

A world where the life of every companion animal matters ...  
Every.Single.One.

## OUR MISSION

To provide a loving home to every companion animal that enters our care.  
Lifetime guaranteed.

## OUR WORK


These five pillars guide our mission:

- > Adoption
- > Community Education
- > Spay/Neuter
- > Rehabilitation
- > Sanctuary (lifetime care)

## LET'S GET SOCIAL!

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## On the cover:

Kristen Tlachac shares a sunny summer morning with Bella. The Sanctuary's memorial garden is Bella's favorite place to explore after her morning walks.

# Hustle & Heart

Greetings HEA family,

We hope that this edition of *The Companion* finds each of you safe and healthy. Amidst these highly unique times, the animals remain grateful for the investments you're making in their lives. They feel your love and compassion daily – thank you. With the wild ride that 2020 has all of us on, it seemed fitting to start this issue with a story that dates back to the beginning of the year.

Every January our volunteer family gathers for an internal event known as Kickstart. Together, we celebrate the accomplishments of the prior year, we set the direction for the year ahead, and we bring focus to the impact that our vision, mission, and values have on companion animal welfare at large.

Kickstart unites our HEA family. Each attendee receives a keepsake t-shirt, which highlights a unifying message to serve as our theme for the year ahead. When we chose 2020's message, we had no idea just how meaningful the words "Hustle & Heart" would be. We chose these words because our industry requires a continuous hustle (urgency and work ethic). Our actions (or inactions), mean life or death for dogs and cats in need – every day. The support of many engaged hearts, considerably increases our life-saving impact.

Our first sign of the significance of "Hustle & Heart" is described in the excerpt (below). Marcus shared this with our volunteer family on February 1. Kickstart was January 26.

*"Immediately after our Kickstart presentation, I greeted my wonderful wife and daughter in the audience. Typically, my wife says, 'Good job!' This year was different. Her words were, 'Kobe Bryant just died in a helicopter crash.' In that moment, I didn't process what she said. As it relates to the game of basketball, I've always been a big Kobe fan – this news really shook me. Regardless of how you feel about Kobe Bryant as a player, a man, a husband, a father, a coach or any of the other roles he fulfilled in his 41 brief years of life, his intense work ethic was undeniable.*

*As a fan, I found comfort in the many memorials that were shared on social media. Moments ago, I clicked on an article that included Kobe's poem titled, 'Dear Basketball.' As I opened it, these words jumped off of my screen: 'You asked for my **hustle**, I gave you my **heart**.'"*

*Until that moment, I was unfamiliar with that quote. At first this gave me goosebumps, and then my body turned numb. It seems as though our 2020 message of "Hustle & Heart" was connected to the universe on a much deeper level this past Sunday."*

Kobe's passing offered us a brief moment to reflect. And then, just seven weeks later, a public health emergency was issued in Wisconsin. To use a very relevant basketball term – we've been "pivoting" since March 12. Even though these continuous adjustments have required tireless hustle and a ton of heart, our work is changing in exciting ways! As you read this edition, you'll feel your gifts hard at work. You've made it possible for this lifesaving mission to persist in the face of a pandemic. You should be proud!

On behalf of the animals and the entire HEA family, we're endlessly grateful for your kindness.

With Love,  
**The Reitz Family**



## In the Words of a Dog-Loving Cat Family

When the cottage doors opened, it was a night that was all about Blue! Overnight guests, Alyssa and Travis, were excited to extend their love to one of our beloved Sanctuary residents – just because! Travis and Alyssa enjoy mini-getaways during the summer months. These weekend ventures are often overnight trips to a city, or alternatively to a campground with well-equipped cabins. "Roughing it" is not their style. When they learned of the opportunity to stay overnight at HEA they booked right away. What's better than a well-equipped cottage that includes the opportunity to love up on a dog or cat?!

Here's the note they left us in the guest journal: "Travis and I had a sleepover with Blue last night. What a good boy! He wasn't shy at all, he was excited to see us, and he slept all night long stretched out between us. If we weren't already a 4-cat household, we'd just take him right home with us! We'll miss him."

### ARE YOU LOOKING FOR BLUE?

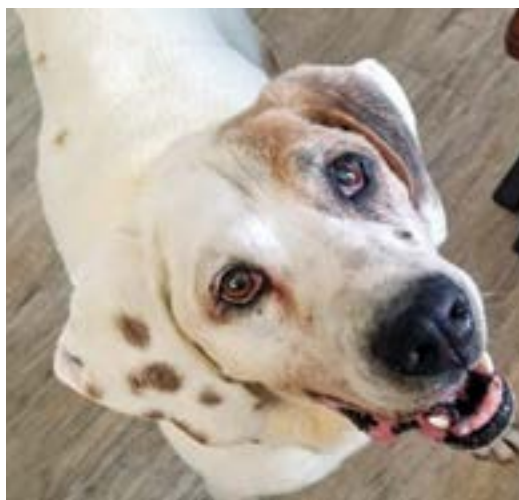
Blue arrived to HEA in 2013. He was then adopted and spent nearly three years in a home – but it wasn't quite right. His time at HEA has revealed that his perfect family will feature him as an only pet! Older or no children would work extremely well for Blue.

This guy loves his people! In addition to being oh-so playful, Blue appreciates low-key times too. He knows how to sit, stay, drop, and leave it. Plus, he is very polite when walking on a leash. He's also house trained and crate trained! Blue will be ready to celebrate his 8th birthday in October – could it be with you?



## For Petey's Sake

After recently losing her dog, Nicole was missing canine companionship. Feeling the loss, she applied to adopt a new friend. As she was preparing to meet a new friend, her heart told her the time wasn't right. Luckily, someone in Nicole's network of friends was familiar with the overnight guest cottages at the Sanctuary. This offered Nicole exactly what she needed—an incredibly peaceful evening with a canine companion. Nicole knew exactly why she was there—to spoil 13-year-old Petey. This was more than a mini-vacation for her, it was also a retreat for Petey. His expressive eyes tell the whole story, Petey loved his sleepover. Thanks Nicole!



destinationHEA

**Book Your Fall Getaway!**

[StayWithHEA.org](http://StayWithHEA.org)







## Willing to Make a Difference

BY PATTI ZARLING

KRISTEN'S FIRST MOMENT WITH A PUPPY. THIS PHOTO IS STILL ON DISPLAY IN HER HOME TODAY.

**KRISTEN TLACHAC WAS 4 YEARS OLD THE FIRST TIME HER AUNT PLACED A PUPPY IN HER ARMS, AND THAT WAS WHEN HER LIFE-LONG LOVE FOR FURRY COMPANIONS WAS BORN.**

Throughout the years, Kristen and her husband Geoff have donated time and money to several animal rescues and other very worthy causes, but they agree HEA has a very special place in their hearts.

"Everyone knows the Sanctuary is my favorite place on earth," Kristen said during an online interview from their home. "Just a quiet country road with the dogs, and then going into the cottages and having Bella (a dog) snorting and having Titan play bow me. You know, just all these wonderful memories we have, and some day I won't be able to help in all the ways I have an absolute passion for. But I don't want the work to stop just because I'm not here."

The couple doesn't have two-legged kids, she smiles, so they have lots of time to give attention to their four-legged babies. Those are Henry Blue (a cat adopted from HEA) and two other senior kitties, ages 15 and 16; and Emmie, their 10-year-old American Staffordshire Terrier-Rottweiler mix.



KRISTEN VOLUNTEERING AT HEA'S ADOPTION CENTER.

Geoff and Kristen love their own animals but are always looking for ways to help other critters. They started sponsoring a dog and cat at HEA several years ago for each other's birthdays, and then began volunteering for HEA at a local Petco two times a month.

These days, Kristen writes many of the heartfelt stories and snaps many of the photos you may see on HEA's Facebook and Instagram pages. She and Geoff volunteer regularly at the HEA adoption center, and since last November, they've also been regular volunteers at the Sanctuary.

A recent email from HEA prompted Kristen and Geoff to take their love for companion animals to the next level. HEA's new partnership with FreeWill made that easy. The email Kristen received included a link to [freewill.com/hea](https://freewill.com/hea). Just as it sounds, this link offers the ability to create a free will that is legal in all 50 states. This tool also allows people to consider leaving a gift to the causes they care deeply about. In Geoff and Kristen's case, HEA is fortunate to be included in the legacy they will one day share with the world.

Though Geoff and Kristen are relatively young, they said it's never too early to think about developing an official will. In some ways it might seem morbid to think about the end of your life, but they said in many ways it's a relief to have everything buttoned up in writing and to know their savings will provide for their own pets and the animals they love and care for at HEA.

"What if Kristen and I are both on a plane out to California to visit her sister and something unexpected happens?" Geoff wondered. "It's hard enough losing someone, but imagine having to piece together someone's last wishes. It's got to be really heartbreaking for any family."

This online tool is easy to use and walks users step-by-step through the process. They had a will in place, but it needed an update and the cost of this one was just right - free.

Kristen noted, "Most people we know are already comfortable, so we feel great about leaving our legacy with HEA. The more people who give to HEA, the more animals that can be helped, fed and given a new lease on life for generations to come. I want all the animals, the ones I haven't met, the ones I haven't even fallen in love with yet, the ones that will be here long after I'm gone, I want them to be cared for."

In Geoff's words, "Giving to HEA is a natural fit for us. As volunteers, HEA has become part of who we are. We believe in everything HEA does, and there's nobody we'd rather give our money to."

Kristen summed it up perfectly, and the conviction in her voice brings a tear to the eyes as she talks about her passion for cats and dogs.

"If I can do one final good deed the last moment of my life, I want to help animals because I love them," she said. "If people can give to companion animals as their last good deed, just imagine how many animals we can help!" 🐾

“...I DON'T WANT THE  
WORK TO STOP JUST  
BECAUSE I'M NOT HERE.”



GEOFF & KRISTEN

If you don't have an up-to-date legal will, now is the perfect time to write yours, for free, from the comforts of your home (maybe even with a furry friend by your side). And, like Kristen and Geoff, it's a unique moment to make sure your legacy helps so many animals who deserve a chance to play happily, live safely, and receive the love they deserve.



GEOFF AT THE  
SANCTUARY



HENRY BLUE, ADOPTED IN APRIL 2020



**Will you join them?**

Get started at [FreeWill.com/HEA](https://FreeWill.com/HEA)





## A Community of Companions



THOUGH IT'S BEEN A CHALLENGING YEAR SO FAR FOR US HUMANS, THANKFULLY, THE FURRY MEMBERS OF OUR HEA FAMILY ARE NONE THE WISER. DURING THESE HIGHLY UNUSUAL TIMES, THE ANIMALS HAVE HAD: FULL FOOD DISHES, THE VETERINARY CARE THEY NEED, THE REWARD OF A FOREVER FAMILY (FOR MANY), AND THE SAFETY THAT COMES FROM YOUR LOVE.

Entering the crisis, we weren't sure what to expect. Many acts of kindness have reinforced the mission, and that's been reassuring. The brief stories that follow, highlight the kind of lift which has helped to ease our worries. These are just three (of many) examples of how pet lovers are changing lives during these unfamiliar times. Thank you, thank you, thank you! The animals know and appreciate your love.

### "VITALLY" IMPORTANT

In early April, we received an unexpected \$5,000 check from a generous community partner. Not understanding what prompted the gift, we did a little research. We found a video that Lanny Viegut, CEO and owner of Carnivore Meat Company had posted.

As it turns out, Lanny was inspired to give back to the community because of fellow local business owner and personal friend, Jeff Shefchik's commitment to the community. As the President of Paper Transport, Inc. (PTI), Jeff pledged to share a \$100,000 donation with the communities that PTI serves. Jeff and his team did this during the early stages of the pandemic. Lanny responded by launching the Community Relief Challenge in which he encouraged other businesses to follow Jeff's lead. Here's what Lanny had to say after learning of Jeff's good deed, "I thought it was cool as hell, and I was moved and inspired. I immediately shared that with my wife Cheryl, and I said, 'Honey, we have to do something.' She said, 'Yes, we do.' " And so, Carnivore Meat Company committed to sharing \$100,000 of its profits with shelters, food banks, and other nonprofits that need it the most during these difficult times.

We'd say the philanthropic spirit of Carnivore Meat Company is "Vitality" important.

**About Carnivore Meat Company:** This team of passionate pet-lovers, provides dogs and cats (and other carnivorous pets) the opportunity to lead long, vibrant, healthy lives; exactly what they deserve. Carnivore Meat Company is an award-winning manufacturer of premium-quality, raw frozen and freeze-dried pet food and treats. Their products are made in the US and packaged in Green Bay, Wisconsin. One of their brands, Vital Essentials is available in 14 countries. Here in the US, nearly 6,000 independent pet specialty stores carry their products.

## FESTIVAL FOODS FILLS BELLIES

HEA has been a grateful recipient of the Festival Foods Paw Away Hunger program for the past few years. Festival Foods' guests and associates are to thank for the impact of this program. Each quarter partners receive notice of their account balance to request food, supplies, and other essential items to further their missions. We used the remainder of our open balance at the tail end of 2019. We were not expecting to have funds available to spend in 2020.

Imagine our surprise when we received an email on April 6 alerting us to a \$5,000 balance in our account!! We were speechless – in the best of ways! When we asked if this was for us to use, we learned it was a generous gift from Festival Foods and members of our community because of the heightened need. What a gift! Any worry about food had been erased as we entered this very uncertain time. This is a really big deal when you're caring for nearly 200 dogs and cats every day!

### About Festival Foods Food Programs:

Festival began their Food for Neighbors program in 2004 in just eight stores. In 2008, they created Paw Away Hunger to help out their furry friends too. All donations stay in the communities where they are collected. The program currently provides food and supplies to approximately 40 Wisconsin food pantries and 30 Wisconsin animal organizations. This program has collected and donated more than \$2,000,000 since it started in 2004.



## HEROES IN LENDING

Since 2015, American National Bank Fox Cities has been a loyal friend to the cats and dogs at HEA. During the past five years, this kind-hearted team has shared their time, talents, and treasures consistently with our mission. And in April of 2020, amidst a pandemic, this small community bank was clutch for the animals.

We're incredibly fortunate to have so many wonderful volunteers sharing their time and talents with the animals. Even with the tens of thousands of hours of donated time each year, our model does require a small team of experienced staff. The breadth of our work, our future goals, and the volume of outcomes we're responsible for make our lean staff incredibly important to the animals.

When the details of the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) were initially released, American National Bank went to work. At a time when many institutions were focused exclusively on their existing clients, American National Bank stood up to lend a compassionate hand. To confirm the implied, HEA does not currently bank with American National Bank, but they made our PPP loan a priority anyway. Why? Because they care.

The American National Bank team's care and willingness to help HEA was felt in every contact we had. We received (and continue to receive) personal phone calls, guidance, and mentorship. Where we needed direction, we received it. Where we needed connections, we received them. In our experience, the American National Bank team takes great pride in ensuring the success of their clients and community partners, and because of that more dogs and cats know the love of a family.

**Congrats to American National Bank:** In 2019, American National Bank was the proud recipient of the Fox Cities Chamber Corporate Citizen Leadership Award. This Award recognizes organizations with a philosophy of giving and community involvement that make significant differences in the health and well-being of the Fox Cities. The award encourages and supports corporate social responsibility and community leadership. 🐾







TYLER RICH  
VISITS HEA



FRANNY & AMANDA

# Love Conquers All

**THE WEEK OF MARCH 8, 2020 WILL GO DOWN AS ONE OF THE MOST MEMORABLE IN HEA'S 14-YEAR HISTORY. WE NOW REALIZE IT WAS THE IMPETUS FOR AN ADRENALINE-CHARGED, FRIGHTENING, EXCITING, ROLLER-COASTER RIDE...**

Heading into that week, we had big plans for our Saturday night! We were prepared to celebrate our 10th annual Beer & Biscuits with nearly 700 friends of the Sanctuary. At the same time, we were planning ahead for our 2nd annual Hour of Love event, which was on the calendar for May 1 & 2. Plus, we had a really special guest visit planned for March 11.

The week got started on an incredibly positive note. On Tuesday, Dick and Sharon Resch informed us they would be extending a \$30,000 (dollar for dollar) challenge match gift during our May Hour of Love event. The very next day, rising country music star, Tyler Rich stopped by the adoption center as part of his Rich Rescues initiative. For each tour stop Tyler makes, he's visiting a companion animal welfare organization to help promote the importance of shelter pet adoption. Later that evening, he played the Meyer Theatre in Green Bay, Wisconsin. And then...

On Thursday, March 12, "normal" as we knew it, started to change in big ways. A public health emergency was declared for the state of Wisconsin. This announcement included guidance to cancel or postpone gatherings of more than 250 people. We took immediate action and postponed Beer & Biscuits until July 24. The words "Beer & Biscuits" were immediately replaced by "hand sanitizer and social distancing." Instead of partying with our friends, our team spent a grueling Saturday night at a banquet table preparing our animal care operations for the pandemic that would ensue.

## FAST FORWARD TO MAY 1 & 2

After postponing Beer & Biscuits, our event planning team needed to pivot again, and fast. Hour of Love had shown incredible promise in its first year, and its return was fast approaching – by fast, we mean it was just seven weeks away, and the public health landscape was ever-changing.

Hour of Love's namesake originated from the idea that members of our community could sign up for an hour-long time slot. During this hour-long block, participants spend time directly with the cats and dogs that need help. Each participant contacts their families and friends to ask their support of HEA's mission. This "ask" for support is made easier because of a very generous gift matching opportunity.

The in-person nature of Hour of Love called for an immediate redesign. In those seven short weeks, our team made it happen! Hour of Love went "virtual." We're also proud to say that the entire event was planned without a single in-person meeting.

The event lineup included: video chats with cats and dogs (just imagine what they had to say), live video feeds of kittens, drink and dinner demonstrations, outdoor games of "Big Dog" and "Fat Cat" (think the game of "Horse" in your driveway), and even a virtual karaoke night.

The dogs and cats were definitely feeling the love of the community as the giving started on Friday. After a night of limited rest, Saturday got off to a rocking start! Our branding and development director, Marcus Reitz, received an early morning phone call on his way to the adoption center. On the other end of the line was Paul Northway, CEO of American National Bank Fox Cities (ANBFC). Paul was calling to share the news of a grant his team would be receiving through their membership with the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago. His team wanted to share a portion of their grant proceeds with HEA's mission. After years of partnership, ANBFC continues to wow! It was one of those calls that leaves you with goosebumps and tears of joy. Thanks to the generous match from Dick & Sharon Resch, this phone call was an \$8,000 start to our Saturday!

While the generosity of our community continued on Saturday, so did the work of the mission. Six dogs and a cat were adopted throughout the day. One of those special moments belonged to Nice (nka Ozzy). This little fella started his journey with HEA in August 2019. Along the way, he was adopted twice. He was returned both



times. It's often said, "the third time's the charm." And so it was for Ozzy! He must have been waiting for just the right moment because he found his way to forever exactly nine months to the day from his arrival. Watching his little feet scurry out the front door was an absolute joy!

Late Saturday afternoon, our intake team gathered to accept 35 new lives into our care. On his way to take photos of these precious new members of our family, Marcus received a text from our dear friends Rick & Debbie Giesler. When we had a moment to connect, Rick & Debbie, shared some exciting news. They were extending the match by another \$2,000! When the event started, the goal was \$60,000. Because of Rick & Debbie's kindness, the goal had been increased to \$64,000! And we weren't done yet...

Having established a really strong connection with Tyler Rich during his March visit to our adoption center, we reached out to his management team during our Hour of Love planning. His west coast headlining tour was supposed to start on March 19. Sadly, it was canceled. Knowing this, we thought Tyler might have an interest in helping the dogs and cats in some way during quarantine. A simple ask was all it took! We were blown away by his generous offer to perform a concert live from his couch in Los Angeles.

Tyler's team called us just prior to the start of the concert to let us know

*When it came to the fundraising, two teams went head-to-head: Raise the Woof (the dogs) vs The Cat's Meow (the cats). It was a back and forth affair. While all of the animals were winners, the kitties reigned victorious, sending the dogs home with their tails between their legs.*



that Tyler's Rich Rescues initiative would be sponsoring an additional \$500 match during his hour-long show. The way that Tyler engages his fans, it wasn't surprising that they quickly doubled his awesome donation. Throughout his performance, Tyler's wife, Sabina Gadecki-Rich, playfully danced and sang in the background. At the midway point of the show, our team joined Tyler live from the adoption center. We were able to tell Tyler about the many adoption successes since his March visit. He was especially happy to hear about Ross, a very shy Rottweiler-mix. Tyler met Ross during his earlier visit to HEA. After exactly 365 days in our care, Ross had been adopted just hours before the singing started. During the couch concert, we also had the pleasure of introducing Tyler and Sabina to a Husky-mix named Franny. She seemed like a logical feature because Tyler had rescued his Husky, Abby, more than 14 years ago.

After Tyler finished singing his heart out for the dogs and cats, we took to Facebook Live to draw Hour of Love 2020 to an official close. Just as we were ready to sign off, after more than three months in our care, Franny offered two never-before-seen behaviors. She rolled on her back, showed us her underside, and made herself completely vulnerable. She then looked at our founder, Amanda Reitz, and requested a belly rub - for the first time ever! Franny didn't stop there. After experiencing just how good a belly rub felt, she found a face to kiss. Her acceptance of this kind of touch, in that moment, was all the proof we needed, love truly conquers all. 🐾

Tyler Rich's March visit to HEA produced amazing outcomes for the dogs and cats. We had a record-breaking adoption



week (the week after his visit)! And somehow news of our record-breaking week found its way to a Wolf Blitzer segment on The Situation Room (CNN). While the brief wasn't entirely accurate, it was still neat to be featured on a national "good news" clip.



*This year's "virtual" Hour of Love event during the coronavirus pandemic, looked and felt a lot different, but HEA supporters were as generous as ever! You didn't let physical distance stop you from showing the animals how much you care - thank you!*

*Special thanks to this year's matching sponsors - Dick & Sharon Resch, Rick & Debbie Giesler, and Rich Rescues by Tyler Rich. The generosity of our matching donors inspired an amazing collective impact: 400+ people from 19 states invested more than \$68,000 to further HEA's mission! Each of these gifts is already hard at work filling bellies, offering fresh starts, creating healthy futures, and extending unconditional love.*



*Barring anything unexpected, this love-filled event is scheduled to return on April 30 and May 1, 2021. We remain hopeful that next year's event will allow for all the in-person feels, but if for some reason that's not an option, it's reassuring to know that pet lovers are still ready to help (from a distance)!*



## And Then There Was One

**DURING THE SUMMER OF 2015, HEA PARTNERED WITH THE ANIMAL CONTROL TEAM IN THE SMALL TOWN OF CHASE, WISCONSIN. WHAT FOLLOWED WAS ONE OF THE MOST CHALLENGING AND REWARDING RESCUE EFFORTS IN OUR HISTORY.**

The difficulty wasn't because of the number of animals; it was because of the erratic and almost foreign behaviors that each of these dogs displayed. One look was it all it took for the savviest "dog people" to label the entire group as feral. This was a situation with just one other known alternative – euthanasia for 40 adult Springer Spaniels. Additionally, nine of the females were pregnant. This produced 33 newborn puppies. Thankfully, the compassionate couple that provides the animal care and control services for the town of Chase was familiar with HEA's capabilities.

As the calendar turned to 2020, just three of the 40 adults were living at the Sanctuary. It's time for an update! You might recognize their names: Fergi, Ian, and Brownie.

### **FERGI (ADOPTED)**

In March, Fergi found the perfect foster home; she was reunited with fellow Springer, Darci. As expected, Fergi spent her time in a corner. Slowly, she started to open up. Fergi progressed, while Darci reverted. One night, Fergi slept on a dog bed in her foster mom's room. This continued for a few nights. Around the same time, Darci took interest in playing with Fergi. When we talked to Fergi's foster mom about a seriously interested adopter, a prayer was said (looking for a sign). Fergi answered the prayer. She jumped onto the bed for the first time. And so, Fergi's foster home is now her forever home!



### **IAN (ADOPTED)**

Just days after Fergi left the Sanctuary, Ian ventured into a foster home of his own. All things considered, Ian started to adjust relatively quickly thanks to fellow HEA adoptees, Remy (one of the 33 Springer puppies) and Vinnie (another young dog). Around the six-week mark something happened. There was an inquiry about Ian from a prospective adopter. Upon receiving this news, Ian's foster mom informed his foster dad. The verdict was, they both feared Ian would regress. This was exactly what his foster mom needed to hear. Instead of calling to arrange the meet and greet appointment, the call came to let us know that Ian was already home!

### **BROWNIE (SEARCHING FOR A FOSTER FAMILY)**

She's the only Springer still living at the Sanctuary. Shortly after Brownie arrived (2015), she was adopted for a few weeks. In hindsight, Brownie wasn't ready. She needed more space to become who she is meant to be. It's going to take a precise match, but Brownie does have love to offer. The right relationship is going to require a tremendous amount of patience and know-how. She will benefit from living with a very social dog and a very understanding and confident dog owner. Brownie will express fear, so her caregiver will need a deep knowledge of how to read and apply canine cues. Beautiful, curious, and untrusting best describe our Brownie today, but we know there's a much greater depth waiting to be unveiled.

Thanks to you, each and every one of the 73 lives that were rescued during the summer of 2015 have known an abundance of life-changing love. This particular rescue effort is exactly why we exist. It aligns literally every component of our vision, mission, pillars, and values. Now that's a powerful way to change lives! To learn about the elements that define who we are or to assist with Brownie's development, please visit [heanokill.org](http://heanokill.org). 🐾

*"I'll never forget the first time I saw these dogs – six of them playing outdoors at the Sanctuary. They looked to be having the time of their lives, and they probably were. It was one of the first times they had seen the light of day. As I slowly approached the fence, I started to understand where these dogs were at. They raced to the opposite corner, piled on top of each other, shook profusely, and defecated on each other," recalls HEA's Branding & Development Director, Marcus Reitz. "And now, to see those same dogs eating ice cream cones from their owners' hands, or cuddling on the couch; you know you've done the right thing."*



# He's Definitely Balder than a 5<sup>th</sup> Grader

"NORMALLY" AT THIS TIME OF YEAR, OUR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TEAM IS PARTICIPATING IN COUNTLESS COMMUNITY-BASED FUNDRAISING EVENTS.

For many years, spring, summer, and fall outdoor events have helped generate important funding to further HEA's mission. Obviously, this year is shaping up quite differently. The number of community events looks to be very few. This has left us searching for new and creative ways to help fund the needs of the companion animals that we serve.

Marcus Reitz, HEA's Branding & Development Director, continues to scratch his head in search of new ways to replace this critical funding. His head scratching became quite literal towards the end of the "Stay at Home order" He hadn't had a haircut in 91 days! So he offered to do something wild and crazy – Marcus' last 'buzz' cut was in 1992, but he was willing to take a step back in time. A goal of \$500 was set to encourage a repeat of his look from the 5th grade. He willingly upped the ante by offering to shave his facial hair if the total exceeded \$1,000.

You can likely imagine what happened when we posted this opportunity. People gave, and they did so generously and quickly. In just 24 hours, more than \$1,400 was raised to help the 58 cats and kittens that were coming into our care on the same day as his haircut. The answer was revealed quickly – Marcus was definitely balder than his 5th grade self! Thank you to all that supported this pop-up fundraising effort. The animals are better because of you!



## About Marcus in 5th Grade

*In 1992, Marcus graduated from Valley View Elementary School in Ashwaubenon, Wisconsin. The Reitzes had just one pet at the time, a 17-year-old male cat named Bunny. Marcus' everyday style was simple - sweatshirts, sweatpants, and a 'buzz' cut. Along with three of his classmates, Marcus was a member of the flag duty committee. He was definitely the tallest one in his class and a force on the tetherball court during recess. And not surprisingly, he was already working on his marketing skills - he ran for student council president using a play on words from the popular Diet Pepsi campaign slogan: "You've got the 'Reitz' one baby - uh-huh." When asked if he won that race, he admitted, "My memory has deteriorated over the past 28 years." He can't remember.*



## Keepin' On

If you're local to the Green Bay community, you may be familiar with the yard signs – Keep On WI. Campaign organizers, consisting of several local business leaders, describe it like this: "In the midst of a pandemic and uncertainty, Keep On is our rallying cry. A declaration of perseverance and optimism. An expression of our Wisconsin state motto, forward. Keep On is simply here to bring inspiration and hope during this unprecedented time."

HEA was asked (and honored) to offer our perspective on how Wisconsinites should "keep on." Thanks to all of you, companion animals get to "keep on" living!

>> #KeepOnWI





## Part of the Family Volunteer Spotlight

THIS EDITION OF THE COMPANION BRINGS US A VERY TIMELY OPPORTUNITY TO CELEBRATE AN IMPORTANT GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS. HEA'S FOSTER FAMILIES RECENTLY RECEIVED MUCH-DESERVED RECOGNITION AT THE VOLUNTEER CENTER OF BROWN COUNTY'S ANNUAL AWARDS EVENT.

Our amazingly dedicated foster families were selected as the runner-up in the large group category! Not only were their efforts highlighted, but they're also being awarded a \$500 grant to share with the charity of their choice.

Our deeply compassionate foster families welcomed more than 200 cats and dogs into their homes in 2019. In doing so, they collectively devoted more than 7,000 hours of care and companionship to animals in need.

Some of these families have fostered more than 100 pets during their volunteer career

while others are just getting started, but one thing they all share in common is the language of love. Their lives have been enriched by the pure joy, the occasional (but always worth it) heartache, and the personal satisfaction that can only be described through first-hand foster family experiences. Each of these families completely understands why they open their hearts and their homes – because fostering saves more lives!

Congratulations to this wonderful group of volunteers and all of this year's nominees and award recipients!



To learn more about  
fostering, visit:  
[heanokill.org/foster](http://heanokill.org/foster)

### WHO BENEFITS FROM FOSTER HOMES?

Many animals at HEA need extra love and care on their way to finding their forever family. A home environment and one-on-one attention can make all the difference! Animals who benefit from fostering include:

- >> Puppies or kittens who are too young to be adopted
- >> Adult cats that just need a little time to come out of their shell
- >> Young dogs that will benefit from socialization
- >> Senior dogs and cats that will be more comfortable in a home environment
- >> Neglected or abused dogs and cats that need extra tender loving care



# A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

ENJOY THESE MOMENTS OF JOY THAT YOU'VE MADE POSSIBLE! EACH OF THESE PHOTOS HAS A STORY. AND WITH VERY FEW WORDS, YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THE ESSENCE OF EACH ONE – KINDNESS, COMPASSION, AND COMMITMENT.



Tyler Rich performs live from his Los Angeles home during his Family is Forever Couch Concert to benefit HEA. Tyler's wife, Sabina Gadecki-Rich, dances in the background.



Is this not the cutest thing you've ever seen?! Sisters, Kadia and Kateri, prepare for Yappy Hour during Hour of Love.

Lucas (age 8) gives Frankie (age 17) a ride in his stroller. That same day, Lucas also read to the cats at the Sanctuary.



In February, Amanda Reitz, HEA's founder, was recognized with the Outstanding Recent Alumni Award by UW - Green Bay.

Calla Reitz, HEA's youngest adopter, scored a brand new puppy for her 1st birthday! Calla and Theona ("Ona") are best buds.



Longtime HEA residents and bonded brothers, Samson and Saul, recently found a home together.

What's not to love about this photo? Dirk finally tired from eating all the treats that it took to capture his photo.



HEA's very own, Michelle Diederich, welcomes Jason into her home. He joined HEA canine brother, Calvin.



Wolly and Polly (siblings) just hanging out at the Big Brothers Big Sisters annual charity golf outing. Notice Polly's tongue.



At HEA's Kickstart gathering in January, each volunteer in attendance received this shirt. This year has certainly required an abundance of both Hustle & Heart.

# Written in the Sky

**WHILE IT WASN'T EXACTLY WRITTEN IN THE SKY, IT DEFINITELY STARTED THERE.**

As an organization, we had been talking about the need to update our website for quite some time. A lot had changed in the four years since our last major update. If you've ever embarked on a website redesign, you know just how much time a project like this consumes. Often times, even the thought of getting started can stand in your way of adding this project to the priority list. That's exactly where we were stuck, and then we met someone by chance.

During the summer of 2019, we attended a national animal welfare conference in Dallas, Texas.

On the return flight from Dallas to Milwaukee, Marcus struck up a conversation (no surprise) with Katy, a random passenger in his row. Besides a great human connection, Katy's skills and interests were very intriguing. She's a former English teacher with a passion for writing. Now a stay-at-home mom, she loves to collaborate strategically with adults. And most importantly,

**You can check out our all new site by visiting [heanokill.org](https://heanokill.org). In addition to really simple navigation and the addition of some new resources, you'll enjoy:**



- >> Booking your very own overnight stay at the Sanctuary
- >> Sponsoring an animal
- >> Exploring group volunteer opportunities
- >> Leaving a legacy
- >> Making a gift of stock or through a QCD
- >> Becoming a foster home
- >> Shopping the latest HEA merchandise



she adores her family's rescue pup, Georgia.

As we exited the plane, Marcus exchanged contact info with Katy. Shortly after we arrived home, Katy sent us samples of her writing. Her talents matched her character. A few weeks later Katy and her family visited the Sanctuary and adoption center to gain a more complete understanding of the mission. They stayed overnight at the Sanctuary cottages with Meadow, and they even attended last year's Steps for Pets walk.

Having felt like we knew Katy for years, we asked her to consider a volunteer opportunity to help us refresh our website content. She kindly accepted, and she delivered! Katy generously volunteered her time (a lot of it). She interviewed members of our team, she compiled the story, and she challenged us to think bigger. Katy would be the first to say that the results of the new website were because of a much larger team. She's right, other members of the team coordinated the countless nitty-gritty details to build the site and redesign the user experience, but Katy's willingness to join the HEA family lifted this project off the runway.



## So Long Shamrock

### A TRIBUTE TO A SANCTUARY GREAT!

Our **sponsor an animal** program is back by popular demand! We had intended to formally announce the return of this beloved program right here in this column, but Shamrock had other plans. On July 26, she was called to the Rainbow Bridge. She was just five months shy of 20 years old (in human years). To celebrate her wonderful life, we shared a heartfelt post on our Facebook page (@heanokill) on July 27. Shamrock's sponsorship profile will remain active for a bit longer, just in case you'd like to share a gift in her memory. To enjoy the profiles of Shamrock and 19 more deserving cats and dogs, visit [heanokill.org/sponsorananimal](https://heanokill.org/sponsorananimal).



### Sponsor an Animal!

*If your heart is calling you to do something special for a companion animal in need, you can sponsor an animal in your own name, as a gift to honor someone, or as a compassionate way to share a memory.*





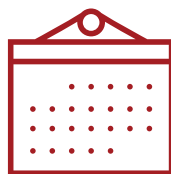
## Just Drivin' Thru

While it wasn't the Beer & Biscuits we hoped for, July 24 offered us the opportunity to say "hello" to many of you (in the absence of snow)! Thank you to all that contributed prize items or donations, attended, enjoyed the live music, sponsored, participated in the auctions and raffles, or volunteered your time! Your kindness definitely saved the day for the dogs and cats!



## A Walk in the Park

Mark your calendars for Saturday, September 19. In the interest of health and safety, things will look different this year, but we're still walking! We look forward to seeing you on the trails!



### Event Overview:

- >> Registration/event details: [stepsforpets.org](https://stepsforpets.org)
- >> Cost: Free registration (with an option to donate)
- >> Location: Meadowbrook Park, Howard, WI
- >> Date: Sat. 9/19
- >> Time: You choose! We'll be there 9am-12pm.

## FREEWILL

### Now Accepting: Gifts of Stock and QCDs

Did you know that you can help more canine and feline companions find loving homes — while saving on your tax bill? If you're 70.5 or older, you can make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) directly from your IRA,

tax-free, at [FreeWill.com/QCD/HEA](https://FreeWill.com/QCD/HEA). And at any age, you can give the gift of appreciated stock and save on capital gains tax by visiting [FreeWill.com/Stocks/HEA](https://FreeWill.com/Stocks/HEA). Both of these online giving tools are free to our HEA community and take less than 10 minutes to guide you through the process!

» **Get started on your tax-savvy giving today!**



**Happily Ever After Animal Sanctuary**  
E5714 Bork Road  
Marion, WI 54950

*If you are moving, receiving duplicate copies of this publication, or wish to be removed from our mailing list, please contact us by email at [donate@heanokill.org](mailto:donate@heanokill.org).*

## Your Support Changes Lives.

HEA relies solely on the generosity of individuals like you to help a growing number of animals every day. We receive no funding from the federal, state, or local government to perform our mission.

### **DONATE**

Your gifts provide shelter, medical care, and the love that our four-legged friends deserve.

[heanokill.org/donate](https://heanokill.org/donate)

### **MATCH YOUR GIFT**

Many employers match their employees' charitable gifts. Your impact doubles (some even triple) when your employer matches your generosity.

### **SHARE A MEMORY OR TRIBUTE**

Honor that special someone or a four-legged friend with a memorial or tribute gift.

### **LEAVE A LEGACY**

Including HEA in your will, estate plan, or as a beneficiary is easier than you'd think.

[heanokill.org/legacygiving](https://heanokill.org/legacygiving)

### **GRANT A WISH**

HEA has a list of wishes! It's important that we receive the specific items on this list. These items are what will provide the biggest benefit to the animals. Our list changes periodically. With more than 700 animals to care for each year, supplies are very important.

### **HOURS & LOCATIONS**

#### **Green Bay Adoption Center**

2255 Fox Heights Lane  
Green Bay, WI 54304  
Visit by appointment

#### **Marion Sanctuary**

E5714 Bork Road  
Marion, WI 54590  
Visit by appointment  
Sleepover ([staywithhea.org](https://staywithhea.org))



## Get Involved!

### **VOLUNTEER**

Looking to make a difference in the lives of companion animals? We have opportunities for groups, individuals, and families. There are many ways you can change lives!

[heanokill.org/volunteer](https://heanokill.org/volunteer)

### **FOSTER**

A remote volunteer opportunity! From the comforts of your own home, you'll provide the care necessary to prepare an animal for adoption.

[heanokill.org/foster](https://heanokill.org/foster)

### **SPEND THE NIGHT**

The guest cottages at HEA give our animals the chance to experience something truly life changing - a sleepover with YOU!

[staywithhea.org](https://staywithhea.org)