

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a light blue t-shirt and blue jeans, is kneeling on a concrete floor. She is hugging a large, white and tan dog that is standing on its hind legs. The dog is looking up at her with its mouth open. The woman has a yellow and black radio clipped to her belt. In the background, there is a large glass window reflecting the sky and some outdoor equipment. A metal bucket is on the floor to the right.

# BEST FRIENDS PET RESOURCE CENTER IN NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

**SECOND ANNIVERSARY REPORT  
MARCH 2025**















A TRANSFORMATIVE TWO-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

March 2025 marks the two-year anniversary of the Best Friends Pet Resource Center in Northwest Arkansas. We're so grateful to all the compassionate people who helped bring this modernized, community-driven animal shelter to life. Since our grand opening in March 2023, the center has been transforming the lives of the pets and people who walk through its doors and supporting shelters, especially in Arkansas, as they work to reach no-kill.



AN INCREDIBLE START ... AND THE LIFESAVING CONTINUES

Here's what we've accomplished together from the time the center opened on March 11, 2023, through February 28, 2025:

 5,415 dogs and cats welcomed	 5,016 Best Friends animals plus 1,428 partner animals placed in loving homes	 2,025 dogs and cats placed in 690 foster homes
 5,665 animals helped through transport*	 12,124 dogs and cats seen in the veterinary clinic	 \$640,713.62 in grants awarded to 58 organizations
 7,307 dogs and cats spayed or neutered	 14,110 vaccines administered	 3,306 pets microchipped
 2,494 amazing volunteers gave 63,407 hours to the animals**	 1 Guinness World Record set for most pet food donated in 24 hours	 1,245 on-site activities hosted plus 21 off-site events and 29 virtual events

\*Best Friends animals transferred plus animals from shelters and rescue partners whom Best Friends helped move  
\*\*Includes foster volunteers



SUPER ADOPTION SUCCESS

A super adoption is more than a pet adoption event — it's a festival of love and lifesaving. And the first-ever Best Friends Super Adoption in Northwest Arkansas was a huge success.

This past June — during Father's Day weekend — 30 rescue groups and shelters from Arkansas, Missouri, and as far away as Alabama

gathered at the Best Friends Pet Resource Center. Their mission: Match the cats and dogs in their care with new homes.

Nearly 2,500 community members attended to meet adoptable animals. By the end of the weekend, over 250 lives had been saved. And the cherry on top? One hundred

percent of all adoption fees were covered thanks to several of our generous partners.

"Everybody here was so happy leaving with new pets," says Linda DeBerry, Best Friends communications specialist. "This is always one of the happiest places on Earth, but this weekend was extra special."

*"Covering an adoption fee may inspire someone to take home a pet today. That's what I wanted. I wanted the shelters to leave this event with empty kennels and empty vans because every animal that needed to be adopted was."*

— Michelle Kamen, a trustee of the Leonard & Robert Weintraub Family Foundation, one of the generous partners that covered adoption fees for the Best Friends Super Adoption.



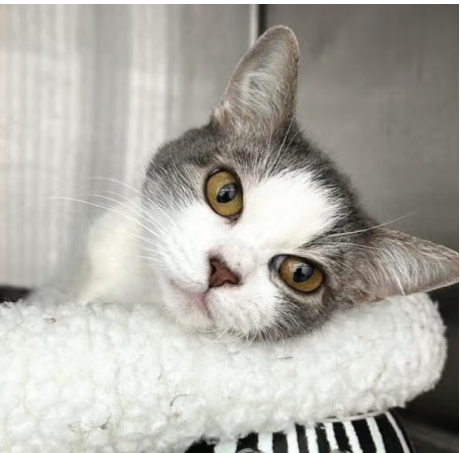
# LEVELING UP LIFESAVING

Like all Best Friends Lifesaving Centers, the pet resource center is playing an important role in our mission to bring about a time when there are No More Homeless Pets. It's also critical to achieving no-kill nationwide. As we close in on that goal, the Best Friends Pet Resource Center is helping more shelters in Arkansas achieve and sustain a 90% save rate (the benchmark for no-kill). **Meet a few of the furry faces we've swooned over at the center:\***

*\*All numbers are from the time the center opened on March 11, 2023, through February 28, 2025*



**Smokey** made a stellar case for adopting a senior dog. At 16 years old, he was wise enough to appreciate the finer things in life yet pretty spry for an older guy. Smokey came to Best Friends from Conway Animal Welfare Unit in Arkansas and quickly moved on to spend his golden years in a home of his own.



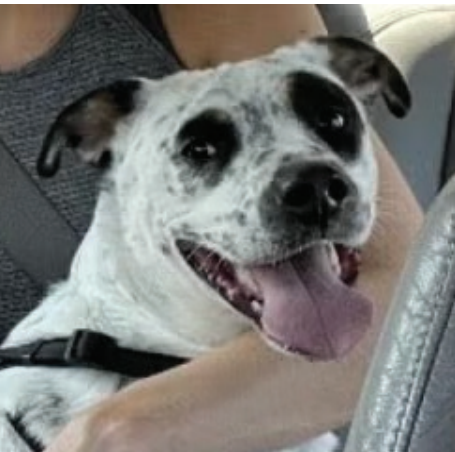
**Sir Karen** got his name because of a mix-up on the paperwork he arrived with from North Little Rock Animal Control. But it ended up working in his favor. His adopter — who enjoys scrolling through Petfinder to find cats with funny names — clicked on his profile and fell in love.



**Boxer pups** came in a batch of four to the center from the West Memphis Animal Shelter in Arkansas. The pups were treated for a respiratory illness, then quickly scooped up by adopters. So far, we've welcomed 826 puppies under 6 months old to the center.



**Shadow** is “the most delightful kitten,” according to her adopter. In just a few short months, she has befriended her older cat sibling, and the two play well together. And despite their size, Shadow has fallen in love with the family's three big dogs.



**Neo** was rescued from a cruelty case and held as evidence in a shelter in North Little Rock, Arkansas, for nearly 500 days. But thanks to the love and care he received from shelter staff, and then at Best Friends, he's a much-loved member of a new family today.



**Manon** may have looked mad tucked back in her hidey hole in Musette's Cat Enrichment Room. After coming to Best Friends from Baxter County Animal Control in Arkansas, she needed some time to overcome her shyness. Eventually, this sweet girl climbed out of her hiding spot — and right into someone's heart. So far, 888 cats have called Musette's their home-between-homes.



**Georgia** sure looked happy to be one of the first pups pampered at Cotton's Beauty Bar. Cotton's was named in memory of Tina Pendergrast Santi Flaherty's beloved shih tzu, whom she adopted through Best Friends. The self-service bathing spa is free to the public. It also helps adoptable dogs look their best and make a good impression on their new families. Fresh from the spa, Georgia, who came to us from Fort Smith Animal Haven in Arkansas, quickly landed her new home.



**Eeyore** quickly turned out to be more than a pet after being adopted by Allen Burkhart and his wife. “He's a good therapy cat,” Allen, a combat veteran, says of his new best friend. Eeyore, who came to us from Pine Bluff Animal Shelter in Arkansas, was one of 2,361 kittens under 6 months old we've welcomed so far.



**Sweet Pea** says, “No ears? No problem!” Found injured in a parking lot, Sweet Pea came to Best Friends from Community Cats of Central Arkansas, a rescue group. Because her outer ears were damaged, her sweet foster caregiver crocheted her a new pair before she landed a home of her own.



**Pumba** came to the Best Friends Pet Resource Center from Bentonville Animal Services. When the team posted his picture on Facebook, the man Pumba once lived with saw it and contacted Best Friends right away. Family circumstances had forced Pumba's person to rehome his best buddy. But now that he was in a better situation — and Pumba needed a new home — he wanted him back. The team waived the adoption fee and helped celebrate an ecstatic reunion between Pumba and his person.





*“What’s really exciting is that we’re disrupting a fundamentally broken animal-sheltering system and piloting what will be the new norm. In the future, homeless pets will no longer be held in kennels and cages, nor be subject to being killed simply because they wound up in a shelter. Our best friends deserve to be treated better, and we’re showing the country what that can look like.”*

— Michelle Logan, Best Friends Pet Resource Center executive director

**A Q&A WITH MICHELLE LOGAN,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE BEST  
FRIENDS PET RESOURCE CENTER**

**What programs and services does the Best Friends Pet Resource Center offer to the community in Northwest Arkansas?**

We provide plenty of ways for people to connect with pets at whatever level they can commit — whether that’s through adopting, fostering, visiting, or volunteering. Our approach is welcoming, accommodating, and judgment free in allowing folks to get the animal companionship they are seeking.

We offer free vaccination and microchip clinics to the community on a weekly basis plus low-cost spay/neuter services for the public and our coalition partners. We also have a pet food pantry, pet retention resources, cat and dog behavior support, and so much more.

**In 2016, Best Friends announced the bold goal to lead the country to no-kill in 2025. What are the center’s main focuses in 2025?**

We’re focused on being a community resource for people and pets, as well as helping a minimum of 15 Arkansas shelters get to no-kill.

**How are you working with shelters in your region to help the country get to no-kill?**

Through the pet resource center, we’re helping more shelters achieve and sustain no-kill. Our goal in 2025 is to help at least 15 Arkansas shelters reach a 90% save rate. We’re relieving pressure on these shelters by taking in their dogs and cats and placing them in loving homes. Meanwhile, we’re assisting these shelters in enhancing and implementing sustainable lifesaving programs — so that once they do reach no-kill, they can maintain it.

**What are the things that make this center uniquely a Best Friends center?**

The vibe, the energy, the compassion, and the fun!

**What sets it apart from the other Best Friends centers?**

The Best Friends Pet Resource Center serves both pets and people in the community in ways that have never been done before. We’ve created a welcoming community destination where people can connect with adoptable pets, find resources to help keep their pets at home, get involved in lifesaving, and help Arkansas — and the entire country — achieve no-kill.



**CASE STUDY:  
HELPING CONWAY ANIMAL  
WELFARE UNIT ACHIEVE NO-KILL**

Conway Animal Welfare Unit, serving nearly 70,000 residents, takes in 1,100 to 1,200 animals annually. After partnering with Best Friends in late 2023, the shelter’s save rate rose from 74% in 2023 to 88.6% in 2024.

With Best Friends’ support, Conway tackled pet admissions challenges, simplified adoption processes, improved cleaning protocols, and launched a foster program and an online pet resource board. We also helped address medium and large dog placements through playgroup training, reducing stress, and boosting adoptability. By the end of December 2024, 138 animals were transferred to the Best Friends Pet Resource Center.

In January, Conway Animal Welfare Unit officially became no-kill with an average save rate of over 90% (the benchmark for no-kill) from February 2024 to January 2025. This incredible lifesaving improvement is a testament to the power of collaboration — and an example of how we’re working with shelters around the country to Save Them All.



*“Best Friends Animals Society has a mission to see the country ‘no kill’ by 2025. Conway Animal Welfare Unit is excited about our partnership and strives to move in that direction.”*

Courtesy of a Facebook post shared by Conway Animal Welfare Unit





## 10 ACTS OF KINDNESS

Over the past two years, so many visitors, volunteers, businesses, and community members have outdone themselves in the compassion department. We are grateful to all of them for every act of kindness. Here is just a sampling of them:



**An anonymous supporter** in Nashville sent a big box full of blankets, treats, cat and dog toys, scratch pads and tennis balls.



**First-grade students** from Founders Classical Academy visited the center for a field trip and helped some of our adoptable dogs find homes by creating trifold presentation boards to let people know how awesome the pups are.



**Hounds Lounge** donated several boxes of items and Royal Canin donated leashes to our community pet pantry. Named by Fresh Step, the Community Pet Services & Pantry distributes items to families in need, so they can keep their beloved pets at home and out of shelters.



**Community members** showed up on a snowy day to help get 28 dogs from the center into foster homes within just two-and-a-half-hours. We then contacted Centerton Animal Services to see whether they needed foster volunteers, and they said yes. We sent staff to assist, and the community came out again to take nine of their 11 eligible dogs into cozy foster homes.

**Windy's foster family** brought her to the pet resource center to show her off for adoption. The children, dressed in Best Friends shirts, displayed a poster they'd made about Windy and told potential adopters everything they needed to know about the pup. (And, yes, Windy has been adopted.)



**Caroline and Julianna** made and donated super cute cat houses to go home with our cats when they are adopted. The girls also donated handmade blankets for the dogs in our care.



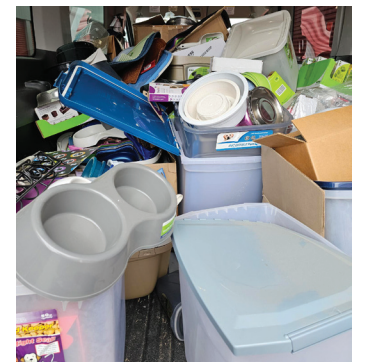
**Anniston** collected dog and cat toys for her ninth birthday to give to the animals at the Best Friends Pet Resource Center. The result? Two bags full of toys, which Anniston handed out to happy pets.



**Arvest Bank** held a pet food and treat drive in all their branches in Benton and Washington counties to help provide pet food, treats, and toys for the holidays.



**Samiksha**, a fifth grader from Bright Field School, spent a Saturday raising money to donate to Best Friends. She came in on Sunday and donated more than \$75.



**Van Ness Pet Products** sent us a van full of all kinds of pet goodies, including food and water bowls and mats and scratch pads, for the dogs and cats in our care and those in the care of our shelter partners.



SPONSOR AND PARTNERSHIP SPOTLIGHT

We would like to give a special thank-you to all the heroic organizations — including our founding partners and other generous supporters — who teamed up with Best Friends to save more lives in Northwest Arkansas and beyond since the pet resource center opened. Here are just a few of them:

- **Baby Doge Coin, Blue Buffalo, Purina, “I and love and you,” Walmart, and the Trisha Yearwood Pet Collection** teamed up with Best Friends to set the Guinness World Record for most pet food donated in 24 hours by donating 81,021 pounds and 13 ounces of pet food to shelter partners and the public. J.B. Hunt handled all the logistics for the event, including storing the food and hosting the official weigh-in. Within just a few hours, all the food had been distributed to shelter and rescue partners and community members.
- **The J.B. Hunt customer experience team** hosted a pet food, supply, and cash drive via a pet photo contest. Best Friends used the donations for the pets in our care, local shelters and rescue groups, and our community pet food pantry.
- **Blue Buffalo and Walmart, along with the Leonard & Robert Weintraub Family Foundation,** covered 100% of adoption fees during the first Best Friends Super Adoption held here in Northwest Arkansas.
- **GoodPop** was the presenting sponsor for the Best Friends Super Adoption. Other sponsors included **Post Consumer Brands, Mars Petcare, Purina, and “I and love and you.”** We also had a special appearance by Purina's Incredible Dogs, who showed off their agility and flying disc skills.
- **GoodPop** also held a Good Deeds with GoodPop Day in May 2024 at the Best Friends Pet Resource Center. Anyone who brought dog or cat food to donate to our community pet food pantry received a free fruity GoodPop frozen treat.
- **“I and love and you”** featured us as Rescue of the Month in March 2024 and has continued to recognize us as Rescue Partner of the Month, including in February 2025. They’ve also donated over 2,000 pounds of cat and dog food to our pet food pantry and shelter partners.
- **Purina** has helped to keep pets at home with their families by donating several pallets of pet food to supply Best Friends’ community pet pantry.
- **The Simmons Pet Food team** donated more than 7,000 pounds of wet cat food and wet dog food to Best Friends to support disaster relief efforts after devastating tornados tore through the area. Walmart and **Sam’s Club** formed an amazing assembly line to get the food unloaded efficiently and quickly.



Best Friends has teamed up with 21c Museum Hotel in Bentonville to offer dog sleepovers for guests staying at the hotel. Guests pick up their slumber party pal and an overnight kit at the Best Friends Pet Resource Center and enjoy belly rubs, play, and snuggles at the hotel all night. Those who fall in love with their sleepover buddies can adopt them when they return to the center.

THANK YOU!

Everyone at Best Friends — most especially the animals — would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for giving homeless pets in Northwest Arkansas and across the entire country a brighter future. Thank you for making the Best Friends Pet Resource Center a reality and for two years full of love and lifesaving.

Together, we will Save Them All.



BEST FRIENDS PET RESOURCE CENTER ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Thank you to this special group of leaders who serve as thoughtful advocates for companion animals, providing counsel and expertise and helping to increase awareness and drive traffic to the Best Friends Pet Resource Center. The committee also donates pet food and supplies regularly to support the pet pantry at the center. Their teams volunteer here and hold regular meetings in the Community Hub.

Current members:

- Kaitlyn Shadiow, VP, Walmart Pet and committee chair
- Aaron Gorman, team lead, Post Consumer Brands
- Andy Beilke, VP, Blue Buffalo
- Candy Lambert, Clorox
- David Keefauver, EVP, J.B. Hunt Transport Services
- Don Morgan, VP, Purina
- Jerra Nalley Toms, Sam M. Walton College of Business
- Kristin Kuhlown, community leader
- Marcus Souza, VP, Mars Petcare
- Steve Galen, retired from Bissell





