



EST 1973.
CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF HELPING ANIMALS IN THE COMMUNITY.

WINTER NEWSLETTER

February 2023

An Easy New Year's
Resolution to Keep:
Volunteering!

See page 4 to learn more



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Letter from the President

DIANE MENZA

Welcome to a new year in which Animal Care League will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary—years in which we have successfully provided shelter, medical care, and comfort to animals in need.

First, thanks to all of our donors, volunteers, a hard-working board of directors, as well as to our staff. You all rose to the occasion—it is much appreciated. We completed the first phase of our construction and started the second phase in January, 2023. Kira and her staff are keeping the shelter open during construction. For those that have not seen the completed first phase, please come visit, we know you'll think it's exceptional.

During 2023, we will continue to further our mission to serve as a community resource—emphasizing the essential nature of strengthening the human-animal bond. Providing shelter, medical care, and comfort to animals in need is at the heart of everything we do at Animal Care League. It centers us as we live through the continuing outbreak of the Coronavirus variants, Influenza, Respiratory Virus and Economic disruptions.

Additionally, in 2023, our goal continues to be to unite the passion and commitment of donors, advisors and community leaders as we expand our facilities and programs to create sustainable solutions which will serve to affect Animal Care League for years to come.



All my best,

Diane Menza
President

From the Desk of the Executive Director

KIRA ROBSON

Dear Friend-

I hope that this newsletter finds you well and that your new year is off to a great start! We wrapped up 2022 with some amazing accomplishments including kicking off our Impact Expanded Capital Campaign, completing Phase 1 of our expansion and renovation project, having some of our most successful campaigns and events yet, and hitting (and exceeding) a long standing goal of finding loving homes for 1,000 animals!

As we kick off 2023, our 50th anniversary year, I couldn't be more proud of what we have accomplished thus far or more excited for what lies ahead. Our commitment to build a facility that will allow us to save 3-4 times more animals and support pet parents in the community by leaps and bounds sets the stage for what we will accomplish in the years to come.

This year will be exciting and challenging as we navigate ongoing construction, work to grow our staff support, program capacity, and volunteer support, while also working to strengthen our financial capacity. Also know that even with all we have going on, we will not waver from ensuring that animals in need have a safe haven, and that we will continue to increase our lifesaving efforts while ensuring that the individual needs of the animals in our care are top priority. In order to make our vision a reality, we will be reaching out to our community and supporters more than ever before.

You can help by saying yes to more of our asks this year, joining our membership program, signing up to volunteer, becoming a foster parent, giving at a slightly higher level this year, signing up to make a monthly donation, or by supporting our Capital Campaign with a leadership gift.

You will want to stay in touch with us as we have some special events planned this year, as well as a special 50th Anniversary Edition of our newsletter coming out later this year! It is such an exciting time for the organization and I am grateful to have your support as we continue to expand our impact!

Thank you for all you do for Animal Care League and animals.



Kira Robson
Executive Director

Pardon Our Dust: We're Expanding to Save More Lives!

Animal Care League's New Adoption Center Complete

In December of 2021, ACL broke ground on a phased construction project to transform our facility and our organization. In December of 2022, phase 1 of the project, ACL's New Adoption Center was completed. The new adoption center was built with a goal of providing animals a low stress environment while also working to destigmatize the adoption experience, and better foster the human/animal bond. The Dog Town Adoption Area gives adoptable dogs their own individual suites while allowing for bonded pairs or litters of puppies to be comfortably housed together. Our Critter Corral is a flexible space to showcase rabbits, hamsters, guinea pigs and will offer an enrichment area for adopters and volunteers to bond with small animals housed in the space. The Kitty City cat adoption space utilizes fun and modern enclosures as well as open suites with tons of natural light and windows for our temporary residents to enjoy.



A family meeting cats in Kitty City

We may need to adjust our hours/availability of services while we navigate construction. If you have any questions, please call, message/email, or see our online FAQ sheet for more information.

Our Welcome Center gives visitors an inviting look into the adoption spaces, will have a retail shop to buy pet supplies, and swag, and give our adoption team a laid back space to conduct adoption counseling. Additionally, the new adoption center's Community Room will act as an event space, training room for staff and volunteers and a place for community members and partners to meet and collaborate.

The new adoption center began hosting adopters in January and while it will work as a swing space during construction (adoptions are currently by appointment), we are happy to report that 124 matches have already been made!



The OPRF Chamber of Commerce meeting in ACL's Community Room

Phase 2 Underway!

While working to move adoptable animals and our adoption team into our new adoption center, we were also preparing to break ground on the 2nd phase of construction. ACL has done some great work out of our current facility, but a modernization of our space and expansion of our capabilities is long overdue. Phase 2 will focus on a complete demolition and remodel of the buildings in which the bulk of our operations occur. This means it is time for us to say "Pardon our Dust" because we will be working to remain operable during construction. During construction, we will still be available to our animal control partners, for lost/found pet services, and of course will continue to find loving homes for animals in need!

Once completed, our facility will have a more functional space equipped to help 3-4 times more animals in need. Our new facility will feature low stress animal housing, expanded in house medical capabilities, offer spaces for our volunteers and staff to work with animals who are recovering from trauma or those who are having a hard time in the shelter environment. It will feature proper isolation suites, a grooming room, a safe place for our



1011 Garfield St lobby under construction

animal control partners to drop off animals after hours, and of course a wonderful adoption center to help future pet parents make life long connections.

Thank you in advance for "pardoning our dust" during this incredible transformation. With your support, we will soon be inviting you to the grand re-opening to celebrate Oak Park's new 19,000 SQ FT Pet Resource Center!

"ACL has done some great work out of our current facility, but a modernization of our space and expansion of our capabilities is long overdue."

Help Make Our Vision a Reality

We can only complete this transformation and expand our impact through the generosity and support of our community. Thanks to a group of generous leadership donors we were able to begin our project, but we have a hefty working campaign goal. Funding will be key to determining the pace of construction, and programming priorities. We are currently looking for donors who are interested in making a gift at the \$10,000 or above level. Donations at this level can be paid over time and naming opportunities are still available.

If you or someone you know is interested in learning more or making a leadership gift to our Capital Campaign, please contact Kira Robson at 708-848-8155 ext 128 or executivedirector@animalcareleague.org.

2022 Impact

Our Mission

Animal Care League is committed to providing shelter, medical care, and comfort to animals in need, thus serving as a community resource and strengthening the human-animal bond.

Our Vision

We envision a world where every animal knows love and safety, and where every person is empowered to be an advocate for the animals in their communities.

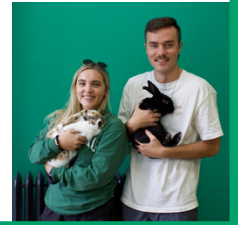
Our Values

ACL believes innovative programming is fundamental to ensuring that every animal we serve knows love and safety. Such innovation requires that we champion a progressive model of care for the animals and pet owners who live in our communities. It also means that every program we deliver must aim to strengthen the human-animal bond and promote intervention and prevention to help keep animals out of shelters and in loving homes.

1,155

Adoptions in 2022

We are excited to celebrate the milestone of hitting, and exceeding 1,000 adoptions last year!



1,349

Animals Given a Safe Haven

202

Animals Reunited with Owners



16,029

Pounds of Pet Food Distributed



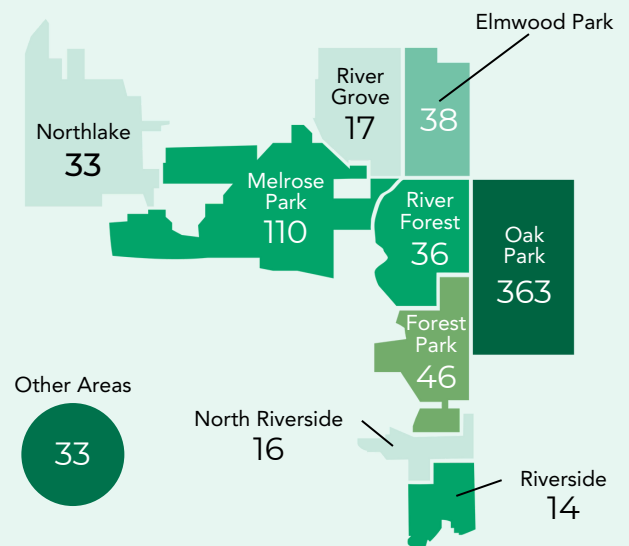
95%

Save Rate*

13K

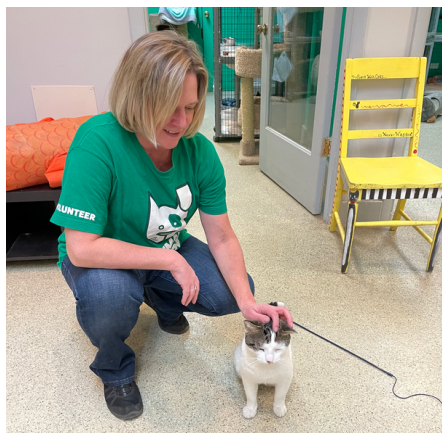
Volunteer Hours Given

2022 STRAY INTAKE BY VILLAGE



*ACL helps the most vulnerable animals and still ended the year with a 95% save rate.

This Year, Resolve to Help the Animals in Your Community!



Volunteer helping with cat enrichment

"I guarantee that there is a spot for each person that is interested...a spot that will help directly or indirectly to make a difference in the life of our furry friends."

them until they find their forever home, it is truly heartwarming.

"They work tirelessly to make sure that every single one of our animals is cared for every single day. I'm blown away at the dedication of our volunteers, and that makes all of us try even harder for the shelter pets. If there is one thing I could say to our volunteers, it would be thank you all so much for everything you do to help our pets, every single day. You are all amazing!"

The shelter, especially volunteering, brings people of all kinds together for a common purpose, and when everyone plays to their strengths, the results are inspiring. No matter what you're good at, there's something for you in the volunteer program. If you love dogs and being active, you can walk dogs; if you love cats and being not-so-active, you can do cat enrichment; If you love talking to strangers, you can help out at our community events; if you don't, you can help out around the shelter with vital day-to-day tasks! Every type of shift directly helps shelter animals find their homes, which, as many volunteers will tell you, can be a special kind of reward.

"When I left my career of 30 plus years, I was worried about finding my new purpose in life," says Robin, who has volunteered for nearly 7,000 hours at ACL. Although Robin has volunteered in almost every role possible by now, it was walking and handling shelter

"We would not be able to do nearly as much lifesaving if it wasn't for our volunteers."



Volunteers on a coffee date with a shelter dog

dogs that first gave her a completely new perspective.

"It wasn't until I started to walk them and provide some enrichment in their daily lives that I finally understood how important volunteering at the Animal Care League was to me, and to the very animals that we are trying to help. Walking dogs that I had previously only seen in passing made me understand that any type of volunteering with ACL is vital to those that depend on us for a clean bed, toys, treats, medical care, and a loving staff to care for them during their stay.

"Not everyone has the time I have to do this, and some are not comfortable with every type of volunteering, but I guarantee that there is a spot for each person that is interested—a spot that will help directly or indirectly to make a difference in the life of our furry friends. I never regret one day of my decision to commit to this organization."

For volunteers like Robin, whether it began as a new year's resolution or not, helping out at the shelter stuck. And as we expand, there will be more volunteering opportunities than ever before. Kick off this year with a good habit that will not only improve your life and the lives of the animals you meet, but also help make your community a better place to live. Go to tinyurl.com/ACL-Volunteer-App to fill out the application, or email Rebecca at volunteer@animalcareleague.org to find out everything you need to know about volunteering. We can't wait to meet you!



Charmaine Seeks a Loving Forever Home to Call Her Own

Despite a Rough Start, Charmaine More Than Lives Up to Her Name

When Charmaine first crossed paths with ACL, things could have been going better. The Oak Park stray was dirty and in need of medical attention, and in place of a collar she wore a 6 lb chain with a padlock. Right then, ACL was where she needed to be. Now, having spent lots of quality time with our ACL staff, volunteers, and fosters, this good girl would love nothing more than to find a loving forever home.

With an entrance as dramatic as hers, you'd be forgiven if you assumed Charmaine to be hesitant around people. But that, as it turns out, is not the case. In fact, she absolutely adores every human she meets! Charmaine has been a volunteer favorite and a lovely foster dog for about as long as we've known her, and you won't have to go far at the shelter to find someone who will tell you so.

"Charmaine is wonderful in the home and deserves one to call her own," says one volunteer, who has hosted Charmaine for the weekend on multiple occasions. "She is very easy, she never got into anything that she wasn't supposed to, and she never had an accident. She would lay with me on the couch, and when it was time for bed she would pop in the bed. You have to move fast, as she likes to hog the covers. She likes to look out the window [of the car] and watch the world go by. My time with her was wonderful, and if circumstances were different, I would have no hesitation in adopting her."

Charmaine left a similar impression on her current foster mom, who summed her up in these words:

"LOVEBUG, GENTLE SOUL, SWEET BABY, BEST BABY IN THE WHOLE WORLD."

As you can see, Charmaine's endorsements tend to be of the ringing variety. Her wait has been a long one, but we know there's a forever home in this girl's future. If you have room for a sweet, loving dog who is more than ready for her big break, or if you know someone who does, visit animalcareleague.org/dogs and fill out the questionnaire to come meet her.

"Charmaine is wonderful in the home and deserves one to call her own...She would lay with me on the couch, and when it was time for bed she would pop in the bed. You have to move fast, as she likes to hog the covers."

Visit
animalcareleague.org/adoptions to start the adoption process today!

Have questions? Contact
adoptions@animalcareleague.org or
call (708) 848-8155.

"Saving one dog will not change the world, but surely for that one dog, the world will change forever."

– Karen Davison

Diamonds in the Rough

Recycled Jewelry Makes a Difference for Homeless Animals

If you're a frequent visitor to Animal Care League's 2nd Chance Shop, you may have noticed the diverse and ever-changing jewelry displays. In and around the long glass case that occupies one corner of the shop, necklaces, bracelets, earrings, watches, and all manner of other shiny and unique accessories gleam, waiting to be found. Like the animals at the shelter, each of these pieces has a story to tell. And like the animals at the shelter, taking one home makes a real difference.

Jewelry is the shop's top-selling category, thanks in part to volunteer Ann Carlson. Responsible for the jewelry section, Ann evaluates and displays new pieces, curating the spread of unique jewelry that you'll see any given day at the shop. In 2022, with an average price of about \$4.50 per item, jewelry alone raised tens of thousands of dollars for animals at the shelter.

Ann has seen all kinds of jewelry in her more than a decade of 2nd Chance Shop volunteering, and, regardless of their value, these pieces often paint a picture.

"On a few occasions I've had the pleasure of receiving an entire jewelry box full of items," She says. "Once it was a collection of

outlandishly beautiful men's cuff links that would have made Liberace swoon. There have also been old jewelry boxes that I'm assuming came from someone who was cleaning out a relative's house. I've enjoyed going through the pieces and creating fantasies about the person who had owned the collection. You can tell a lot about a person by the jewelry they've worn."

Finding new owners for these treasures is a fantastic way to raise money for animals in need. But without the generosity of our community, none of it would be possible.

"I'm so pleased that people in our community care enough to donate the jewelry they no longer wear," Ann says, adding, "this is also a shameless plea for anyone reading this to donate the jewelry they haven't worn in the past few years!" With new items generously donated daily, the shop is able to continue providing a great selection, raising crucial funds for animals in need. Plus, as Ann points out, items sold at the shop stay out of the landfill, moving on to a new life instead.

To everyone who shops and donates at the 2nd Chance Shop, thank you for making the shop what it is today. For those who haven't been by, consider donating your old jewelry, stopping in to browse, or telling your friends! When you do any one of these, you'll be making our community a more stylish place for people and a better place for animals.



 facebook.com/ACL2ndChance

 tinyurl.com/ACL-Shop-Emails

 tinyurl.com/2nd-Chance-ebay

808 Harrison St, Oak Park, IL 60304 | (708) 383-9660
2ndchanceshop@animalcareleague.org



15% OFF

One in-store purchase. Valid until 7/1/2023.

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SHOP HOURS

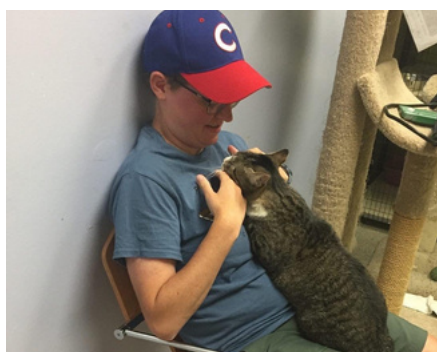
Monday & Tuesday: Closed
Wednesday & Sunday: 11am - 5pm
Tuesday - Saturday: 11am - 6pm

ACL Alumni Success Stories

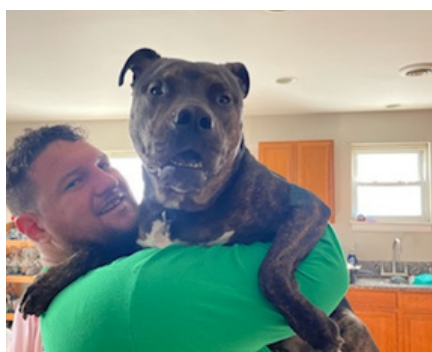
Though days at the shelter can be hectic and sometimes difficult, there is a constant bright spot that never goes away: every day, we get to see the exact moment that lifelong friendships begin. Every animal at ACL deserves a happy and full life, and to be able to facilitate second chances is something we cherish. We also love sharing these moments with you! Enjoy an update from the adopters of Katniss, Bruno, and Varna, just three of the thousands of ACL pets for whom we've helped find a forever home over the years.



Varna with her new siblings



Katniss showing off her cuddling skills



Bruno gets a lift from his dad

Katniss

Back in 2015, we featured a long-term shelter kitty in our newsletter named Katniss. A bit reserved and seemingly not a big fan of cuddling, Katniss had been waiting for her forever home for over a year and a half at that point. More than two years later, the picture above was taken. As it turns out, Katniss IS a fan of cuddling; she was just waiting for the right person.

"I adopted Katniss in August of 2017 right before my second year of medical school started. She had been at the shelter for 3.5 years and was having trouble finding a home, so I took a chance on her. Prior to me, she never really had a home, and I'm so glad I gave her one. She kept me company through long days of studying during medical school and continues to keep me warm 365 days a year while cuddling. Still to this day whenever I come home from work she runs to the door to greet me. If you lay in the exact right spot and call her name she will lay on your chest and purr until she's tired of you and then will bite you (a classic for her.) She is a PRO biscuit maker and even gets all four legs going sometimes.

"My life would not be complete without adopting her, and I'm so glad I took a chance on an older cat that I was told would never have cat siblings and never be a lap cat, both which ended up not being true!"

Bruno

Bruno came to ACL as a transfer from a local high-intake shelter in 2019. While it took nearly four months for Bruno to find his forever home, the wait was more than worth it. Both he and his new family knew they'd found the perfect match!

"Since the first day we met Bruno, he has changed our lives for the better," says Bruno's mom. "I feel like he was always meant to be a part of our family. He is such a sweet boy with all of his hugs & kisses, snuggles, zoomies, random cute barks, and love he gives us. He is our first baby and will always be in our hearts."

"I can write a book [on him]," says his dad. "We knew that Bruno also chose us and made our family complete the moment we took him home. He has taught us to be patient with him and ourselves while displaying his adorable tantrums. We absolutely love him so much!"

Send stories and photos of
your ACL alumni to
[updates@
animalcareleague.org](mailto:updates@animalcareleague.org)

Varna

Varna went through a lot, but she never gave up! After leaving and returning to the shelter multiple times, as well as facing medical issues, she finally found the home she deserves.

"After our 10 yr old dog, Khloe, passed away, I wanted to get another pet for our family," says Varna's adopter. "Honestly, adoption never even crossed my mind until my 10 year old daughter, Ali, mentioned that she wanted us to adopt a bunny. I saw how knowledgeable and passionate my daughter became. I showed her the page of the bunnies available at ACL and told her to take her time and read about each bunny's story. Moments later and with such excitement she said: 'Daddy, I found her, Varna! Look and read about her!'

"As I read her story, I also instantly fell in love with her. I knew it was going to be a challenge, but deep down inside I knew she was the bunny for us.

"Who knows what Varna went through in the past, but every day we made sure we worked together as a family to give her the care, love, attention, and patience she asked of us for her to trust us completely. She loves to cuddle and has been a blessing to our family. One thing I am happy to see is that Varna hasn't gotten the eye discharge she had when we adopted her. This only tells me that she is happy and stress free in her new home with her new family!"

"Varna is sweet, cute, and silly. I love her sooooo much!" says Ali, 10. "I love it when she cuddles with me and sniffs me!" says Julian, 7. "Can I hold her!?" says Joshua, 3. "We love her way of being!" say Mom and Dad.

"She gets excited to see us every morning and loves to show it. She lets us know when she needs her space and when it's okay for us to hold and pet her. She has taught us to work together as a family!"

2022 Donors

Animal Care League relies on donations from our community to fund our lifesaving programs and services. We could not carry out our mission without our amazing supporters. Due to space, this listing only reflects donors who have gave \$150 or more in 2022. Please know that we are grateful for donations at every level! If you have any questions about your donor listing, please contact Quinn at development@animalcareleague.org. A sincere thank you to everyone who donated in 2022!

\$100,000+

Lynne Cooper Harvey Foundation
Menza, Diane
Pasinski, Paul
Pavlik, Marilyn
Ruggiero, Chatka
The Irving and Phyllis Millstein Foundation for Animal Welfare

\$50,000-\$99,999

Prescott, Tom and Mary Smeaton
Smicklas, Mellonie
Williams, Lynne

\$25,000-\$49,999

Ebinger Family Fund
Good Heart Work Smart Foundation
Morrison, Laura
Van Meter, Karen

\$10,000-\$24,999

Akers, Robin
Economy Shop
Jacobson, James and Gaile Cerniauskas
Kocs, Elizabeth
Lynch Family
OPRF Community Foundation
Rao, Chandrika
Rooney, Megan

\$5,000-\$9,999

Anonymous
Anthony & Mary Ann Pasquinelli Foundation
Desiderio, Valerie and Mike
Giertz, Gabrielle
Gumbel, Joan
McClellan, Marsha
Reeve, Rex and Phil McAndrew
Stearns, Susan J.
The Muntwyler Foundation

\$2,500-\$4,999

Bernhardt, Nancy
Byline Bank Oak Park
Jordan, Susan
Lieh-Lai, Mary
Mohabbat, Amir
Prescott, Sr., George
Spiess, Margo
Vasilakis, Chris and Craig Barnes
Wojciechowski, Keli and Gary
Zielinski Family Fund
Zurawski, Daniel and Eric Lee

\$1,000-\$2,499

Albert, Howard
AmazonSmile Foundation
Bolte, Don and Linda
Bugles Across America
CarefulPeach Boutique
Conley, Laurie
Delby, Cheryl
Djukic, Nicole
Forest Security, Inc.
Frateschi, Lawrence
Grand, Kathryn
Greco, Sally
Hammer, Douglas
Harms Family Fund
Herman, Margaret
Hickman, Nancy
Hoersten, Carey
Hoffman, Sarah
Hubacek, Scott
Jackson, Andrew
Kolar, Danielle
Lamb, Kevin
Longfellow Elementry School
Malecki, Melinda
Marlovitz, Ted
Morgan, Sydney
Mustain, Diane
Park Ridge Dental Associates
Rebecca J. Perry
Damsen Charitable Fund
Reder, Paula
Rescue Chicago
Sjostrom, Sue and Darryl

Slade, Renee
Sudkamp, Mary
Sulaitis, Vytas
Tabor, Brad
Tate, Pamela
Thompson, Judy
United Way of Mid-Willamette Valley
Vaschur, Mike
Vazzana, Brian
Vickery, Lorene
Winski, Jessica

\$500-\$999

Abtahi, Stephen
Ackerman, Alexandria
Autobarn Volvo Oak Park
Bartkowicz, Jennifer
Bartkowicz, Linda
Bethany Brown and Steve DeCaspers
Charitable Fund
Bower, Liam
Brown Toyoda, Irene
Bulls, Herman
Burns, Sandra
Carr, Michael
Cary, Paulette
Cheske, Brian
Chmielarz, Sarah
Collins, Ann
Compton, Glenn
Deubel, Jeannine
Donzelli, Barbara
Dumelle, Lili
Durrrie Sales
Eanet, Sarah
Ekborg, Deb
Elara Engineering
Ewangan, Regilyn
Fjortoft, Nancy
Friedman, Gail
Garapolo, Lou and Galen
Garvey, Eileen
Girl Scout Troop 41185
Graphic Conservation Co
Hartman, Casey
Heard, MaryAnn
Hill, Evi
Hill, Marilyn
Hines, Nancy and David

Holmes Elementary School Community Cares Committee
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Jonikaitis, Patricia
Kadampa Meditation Center Chicago
Katz, Judith
Koppes, Thomas
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Lucas, Sarah
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Rajter, Kathy
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Schlesinger, Stephen
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Smith, Jamie
Sperberg-McQueen, Marian and Michael
Sproat, Kathleen
Stearns, Katie
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Young, Carol

Young, John
Young, Melody and James

\$250-\$499

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Arlen, Gayle
Bakker, Kevin
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Beachler, Carol
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Becker, Barbara
Block, Monika
Bonate, Arlene
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Bone, Phyllis
Bostwick, Wendy
Branco, Daniel
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Burchfield, Keri
Burns, John
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Giacoma, Frederick
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Giustino, Amy
Gonzalez, Lynne
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Green, Kyle
GreenLine Pet Supply
Grimm, Lois
Gross, Evelyn
Gryka, Tracy
Hamje, Judith
Harms, Marcia
Hart, Holly
Hatchett, Gina
Heckman, Eilene
Herzog, Susan
Horne, Kathleen
Hoyt, Kimberly
Hroncich, Ruth
Hunt, Jim
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Animal Care League also recognizes Divine Consign, CarefulPeach Boutique, Cross Kicks Fitness Roselle, Great Sip Cafe, Petco North Riverside, and Whirlwind Coffee for their participation in our Pet of the Month program highlighting adoptable animals at their locations and on social media.

Year of the Rabbit!

The Lunar/Chinese New Year began in mid-January and all the ACL bunnies are very excited to usher in the Year of the Rabbit! This year is associated with peace, rest, intelligence, and of course luck, and in 2023, our bunnies are hoping to see that luck turn into loving forever homes! Could this year of the rabbit be the year of you adopting a rabbit?

Make sure you follow us on Facebook and Instagram for fun and educational rabbit content all year long. If you're interested in adopting a bunny visit [animalcareleague.org](https://www.animalcareleague.org). From ACL and all our buns, have a good year of the rabbit!



Upcoming Events

Trivia Night!

THURSDAY, MARCH 23RD
ONE LAKE BREWING

Our friends at One Lake Brewing will be hosting ACL for another fun-filled night of trivia to benefit homeless animals! Get your team together and come out on Thursday, March 23rd from 6:00pm - 9:00pm.

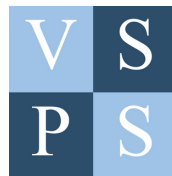
Spring for the Animals Luncheon

SUNDAY, APRIL 30TH
OAK PARK COUNTRY CLUB

Animal Care League's 26th Annual Spring for the Animals Luncheon is back in person for the first time since 2019! Join us for a delicious lunch buffet, silent and live auction, and great company at the beautiful Oak Park Country Club on Sunday, April 30th.

Learn more about ACL events at [animalcareleague.org/events](https://www.animalcareleague.org/events)

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