THE VANCOUVER HUMANE SOCIETY PRESENTS

animal WRITES

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FORTUNATE & VIXEN



A NEW HARNESS

Because They Matter

Hundreds of guardians came to Pigeon Park this July. They left with supplies, and with the knowledge that help is there when they need it.

Fortunate arrived wearing a spotted bandana that matched the spotted fur of her eight-month-old chihuahua, Vixen. The two of them clearly go everywhere together. Watching them, it was easy to see they are best friends.

Fortunate chose a new harness for her little one, and told our team how much it meant to be welcomed so warmly. Hers was one of many stories from a remarkable day.

On July 19, the VHS held its sixth annual Because They Matter event in Pigeon Park, in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Hundreds of residents stopped by to pick up supplies for their companion animals and to learn about the McVitie Fund, the VHS's veterinary assistance program.

Volunteers and staff handed out hundreds of donated items over the course of the day, including harnesses, collars, leashes, blankets, beds, toys, water bowls, waste bags, and plant-based treats. Just as importantly, they had conversation after conversation with guardians who did not know that help with veterinary expenses was available to them.

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A guardian who never forgot

Last year, the McVitie Fund helped a dog named Cola get the lifesaving care he needed. On event day, Cola's guardian came by our table to thank the VHS staff member who had helped him.

He remembered their name. He told them they had been there in his darkest moment, and that he and Cola would be forever grateful.

Moments like that are why this event exists. Because They Matter is about more than handing out supplies; it is about building trust, listening, and making sure people know that help is there if their animal ever needs it.

“It’s like Christmas!”

One guardian lit up at the sight of an elephant toy and told us their dog loves elephants. Sure enough, the dog took the elephant straight out of their hands, carried it proudly, and looked up with a wagging tail.

Another person looked over all the supplies laid out on the table and said joyfully, "it's like Christmas!"

These are the moments that stay with our team long after the tables are packed away. They are a reminder that the bond between a person and their animal does not depend on income, housing, or circumstance. It is love, plain and simple, and it deserves to be protected.

Why the McVitie Fund matters

The McVitie Fund makes sure that a low income is not a barrier to getting a beloved pet the veterinary care they need. It exists entirely because of donations from caring supporters like you.

Right now, the McVitie Fund team is helping an average of 35 pets each week access urgent veterinary care. It is not unusual for the fund to spend $5,000 on urgent care in a single day.

Events like Because They Matter connect more guardians with that support. That also means we can expect more applications from families in crisis in the months ahead.

For the people we met in Pigeon Park, a veterinary bill can be the difference between keeping a beloved companion animal and giving them up. No one should have to face that choice. Every gift to the McVitie Fund helps keep animals healthy, loved, and home with the people who know them best.

Thank you for being part of this

None of this happens without you. Your support is what allows the VHS team to say yes when a guardian calls in a moment of crisis.



Because of supporters like you, loved animals can get the care they need without being surrendered to an already overflowing shelter and rescue system. Because of you, Vixen has a new harness for her walks with Fortunate. Because of you, Cola's guardian had someone standing beside him when he needed it most. Because of you, they know they matter.

Thank you, from all of us, for recognizing that this community, these animals, their guardians, and the bonds between them matter deeply.

You can help a pet stay home

If you would like to help more animals like Vixen and Cola, a gift to the McVitie Fund goes directly toward urgent veterinary care for pets in low-income homes.

To donate by phone, please call Katrina at 604-266-1012. Cheques can be mailed to the Vancouver Humane Society, 303-8623 Granville Street, Vancouver, BC V6P 5A2.

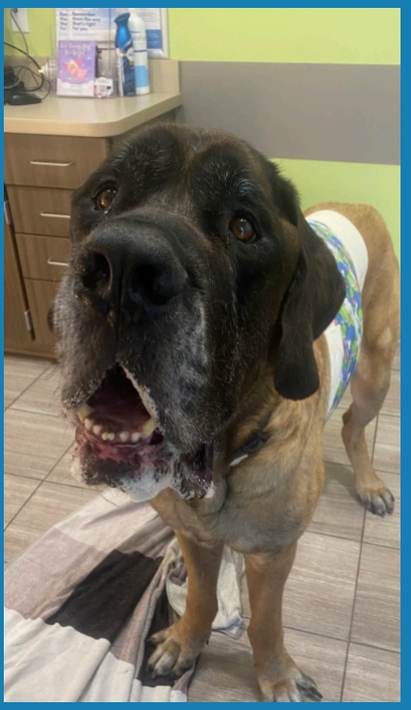
We would love to hear from you, and we are always glad to answer questions about how your gift is used.



Katrina Leppanen
Development Manager

Companion animals need your support

An update from the McVitie Fund



Rufus needed medication to ease his pain

"Rufus is a sweet gentle giant with a sense of humour. He loves to head-butt people as an invite for ear scratches." 8-year-old Rufus is known to be quite the bed hog too, planning his moves intentionally, slowly pushing Caitlin to the edge of her bed while also somehow simultaneously stealing her covers.

Recently Caitlin noticed one of Rufus' nipples looked very engorged. With an infection being the most likely cause, Caitlin knew medication would be needed. Swelling from an infection can be extremely painful, and if left untreated, infections can trigger a life-threatening sepsis response. Caitlin is reaching the end of her medical leave payments so unfortunately wouldn't have access to the funds required to ease Rufus' pain for quite some time.

"He is my sole companion and has taught me so much, including a deep appreciation for taking in nature and building connection with other non-human animals."

Can you donate today to cover the cost of the medication Rufus needed to feel comfortable again?

Halo is back home with Ryan!

When Halo suffered from an infected wound on his tail, Ryan knew without treatment the infection could be life-threatening. Halo and his brother Onyx have been Ryan's biggest support and comfort during Ryan's sobriety journey. Now at almost 3 years sober, Ryan is working towards a diploma as a community support worker.

"I don't know what I would do without him. He is a major, major part of my continued sobriety."

Thanks to the care and generosity of the VHS community, Halo was able to receive the life-saving treatment needed to address his infected tail wound. Halo is now back to his most favourite activities: eating, being chatty, and making biscuits on Ryan's t-shirt while cozying up on his lap.

> "THANK YOU SO MUCH for helping me to get Halo the help that he needs! HALO sends a Meow of appreciation as well."





Katrina Leppanen
Development Manager

Plant-based advocacy saves farmed animal lives



What if compassion for animals could start with what's for dinner? That's the question the PlantUniversity program is trying to answer this fall. Starting in the summer and extending throughout the rest of the year, the PlantUniversity team has published advertisements all over buses, billboards, and the internet to encourage people to help farmed animals by choosing more plant-based foods.

By showcasing the ways that plant-based eating helps animals, our environment, and our own health, PlantUniversity is amplifying the voices of farmed animals and saving lives every day. Every plant-based meal makes a difference, and the team wants to make it easier with simple recipes and guides available at their website.

Another exciting program was the return of UBC VegFest on September 28th, an event dedicated to showing students in Vancouver all of the amazing options they have around them to choose plant-based.

Local businesses, advocacy groups, and student clubs will all gather outdoors to offer free samples, meals, and resources to help cook at home. The event meets students during an important stage when many are choosing what to cook for the first time in their lives. UBC VegFest helps those students make the choices that help animals, one meal at a time.



Matthew Wattier
PlantUniversity Coordinator

Building stronger protections for farmed animals

There is real momentum toward better emergency protections for farmed animals in B.C., and VHS supporters are helping keep it moving.

After a devastating Abbotsford barn fire this year highlighted the challenges of evacuating thousands of farmed animals during an emergency, the VHS has renewed calls for stronger provincial protections.

2,300+
messages of support for meaningful changes to B.C.'s farmed animal welfare regulations



The recommendations for improving farmed animal welfare, including better planning and protections during fires, floods and other emergencies, are already in the hands of the provincial government. Now, the VHS is working to make sure they lead to action.

That work includes bringing the Abbotsford fire and other evidence directly to the provincial government, pressing for action on the Farmed Animal Welfare Advisory Committee's recommendations, and giving British Columbians a clear way to add their voices through the VHS's public campaign and letter-writing action.

This is the kind of long-term advocacy your donations make possible: responding when gaps become clear, bringing forward practical solutions and keeping up the pressure until change moves forward.

Thank you for helping turn shared grief into collective action for farmed animals.



Teri Westerby
Campaign Manager

Thousands are speaking up for animals at rodeos



This summer, thousands of people joined the VHS in calling for a kinder future for animals used in rodeos, both online and on the ground, and your support helped make that possible.

In Calgary, the VHS supplied Calgary Animal Rights Effort (CARE) with resources for four peaceful Buck the Rodeo rallies near the Stampede grounds. Local advocates spoke directly with Stampede visitors, distributed Rodeo Truth educational materials and shared cruelty-free ways to enjoy Stampede season without events that harm animals. Animal Justice also joined advocates at the rallies, helping strengthen the local effort.

And thanks to donors like you, the message travelled much further. More than 7,600 direct actions have been taken by supporters across the VHS's B.C. rodeo and Calgary Stampede campaigns so far in 2026. Together, the rodeo campaigns were viewed more than 1.9 million times, bringing animal welfare concerns to a massive new audience.

Behind that impact was the advocacy work your support makes possible.

The VHS monitored multiple B.C. rodeos on the ground, documented concerning incidents and wrote directly to organizers asking for answers and accountability. The VHS also teamed up with We Animals Media and Animal Justice to call for greater transparency at the Calgary Stampede after We Animals was denied media accreditation to attend and document the Stampede.

Together, the organizations brought national attention to the importance of independent documentation and public accountability.

From supporting grassroots advocates to collaborating nationally and mobilizing thousands of animal allies, your donations are helping build public awareness, strengthen the movement and create pressure for lasting change.

1.9 million
views of animal welfare messaging from VHS rodeo campaigns

7,900
direct actions in support of ending inhumane rodeo events



Teri Westerby
Campaign Manager

Protecting animals behind the scenes

When animals appear on screen or arrive at a community event, it is easy to miss what happens behind the scenes. Thanks to your support, The Vancouver Humane Society is working to ensure animals used in television, film, and mobile live animal programs, such as petting zoos and reptile expos, are treated humanely.

The VHS team is attending exotic animal expos to document welfare concerns, bringing in international experts to share evidence with decision makers, and sharing on social media about the needs of exotic animals. Alongside partner organizations and experts, we are developing practical recommendations to share with the provincial government to better protect animals.

A grant from the Animal Welfare Foundation of Canada funded $7,750 of this work, with a full campaign cost $13,250. Your donor dollars make vital advocacy like this possible. Thank you for standing with animals and helping create meaningful change.



Nadia Xenakis
Campaign Manager

Thank you to our donors

Please accept our sincerest apologies if we have missed your gift or made an error in how it appears. If you would like your gift listed correctly in our next issue, please email katrina@vancouverhumanesociety.bc.ca or call 604-266-1012. We would be very glad to hear from you.

Thank you to the following, who remembered loved ones with a gift to help animals:

Sheryl Smith, in memory of Gypsy
Dadi Zhang, in memory of Banban
Adam Castellani, in memory of Ruby Soho Castellani
Joanna Manning, in memory of Gary and 11 cats
Herb Auerbach, in memory of Mary J. Auerbach, on the decennial of her passing
Patricia Creed, in memory of Kedou
Rita Fischer, in memory of Mia
Samantha Sparks, in memory of Nola Frost
TransLink, in memory of Yvett Chopty
Christine Harris, in memory of Nola McMorran Frost
Blake Johnston, in memory of Big Hank
Judy Werts, in memory of Dolly Werts
Kristi Kral, in memory of Spooks
Leah Skretkowicz, in memory of Allan

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Leanne Marshman, in honour of Marsha Mackie
Paula Caton, in honour of Paula P
Barry Bergeron, in honour of Dr. Annie Wolverton
Corey Tasaka, in honour of Little Bean
Anne Macdonald, in honour of Rose
Lindsey Woo, in honour of Little Bean and Elina
Ruth Archambault, in honour of Chantelle
Amy Kluetz, in honour of Jackson Martini
Joseph Dolcini, in honour of Baby
Kyla Hrdlitschka, in celebration of Shelley Hrdlitschka
Joanna Manning, in celebration of all the wonderful cats who have shared my life, and made it wonderful for the past 60 years!

We thank those who have generously left a gift to VHS in their will. Their memories will live on in our work for animals:

Deborah Lynne Donn

Thank you to the following businesses and organizations that support our work:

Casa Lifestyles
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Vancity Savings Credit Union - Kerrisdale Community Branch
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Amur Financial Group
A Voice4Paws
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GHD
MAKE Vancouver
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Tai Beauty Group
Regional Animal Protection Society
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Lucky Tail

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Betty Rayfield & Rayfield Family Foundation

We are truly grateful to our amazing volunteers, who give their time to support our work.

Our monthly donors are our heroes. Thank you to all of you, from the bottom of our hearts!



Bid for animals: The VHS silent auction is back



Because of supporters like you, animals across B.C. have somewhere to turn when they need help most. This fall, you can help again and find something lovely along the way.

The VHS's annual online silent auction opens October 15 and runs until October 25. Every dollar raised supports programs and advocacy that build a kinder world for animals.

Get a head start on holiday shopping with one-of-a-kind gifts for loved ones, or a little something just for you. New items are added daily, including gift certificates to plant-based restaurants, fitness classes, event tickets, art, cruelty-free clothing, and more.

This year we hope to raise $12,000. Every bid makes a difference for animals in B.C. and across Canada.

To register, pre-browse items, and bid, visit new.biddingowl.com/VHS2026. If you have any questions, we would love to hear from you. Please call Katrina at 604-266-1012 or email events@vancouverhumanesociety.bc.ca.

Thank you for the compassion you show animals all year long.



Katrina Leppanen
Development Manager

Your support is putting animals on the ballot

On October 17, British Columbians head to the polls in local elections. It's a rare chance to ask the people who want our votes what they will do for animals.

Thanks to supporters like you, the VHS has created a voter guide that makes that conversation easy. It covers local, regional, and provincial priorities, from stronger protections for farmed animals to an end to rodeos and mobile petting zoos, pet-friendly housing, low-cost veterinary care, and a ban on pet store sales of commercially bred animals.

For each issue, the guide explains what is at stake, shows where other communities have already acted, and offers sample questions you can ask candidates at the door, at an all-candidates meeting, by phone, or by email.

Local governments have real power to improve animals' lives; candidates listen when voters tell them that animal welfare matters.

After the election, the VHS will follow up with successful candidates, especially those who made animal welfare commitments, to help turn conversations into action.



To request a copy of the voter guide, call 604-266-9744 or visit vancouverhumane.ca/election.

Authorized by Vancouver Humane Society, registered sponsor under LECFA, (604) 266-9744



Emily Pickett
Campaign Director

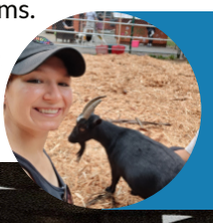
The Protecting Victims Act passes in Canada!



Great news: animals and the people who love them now have one more law to help keep them safe. The Protecting Victims Act received Royal Assent to become law in Canada this past June, creating a safer future for victims of coercive control and the animals they care about.

This year, the VHS supported Humane Canada in sharing Bill C-16, the Protecting Victims Act. This Act criminalizes the distribution of animal sexual abuse material while recognizing harm or threats against animals as part of coercive control and criminal harassment. These types images, harms, and threats are not only acts of cruelty toward animals—they are also used to groom and exploit children and control victims.

This historic milestone was made possible through years of advocacy from Humane Canada (the federation of humane societies and SPCAs), Member organizations, and people like you who support the vital work that happens for animals every day.



Chantelle Archambault
Communications Director

VANCOUVER HUMANE SOCIETY
HELPING PEOPLE HELP ANIMALS

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Listening, learning, and unlearning on unceded xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish) & sel̓íl̓witulh (Tsleil-Waututh) territories.

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