

THE VANCOUVER HUMANE SOCIETY PRESENTS

animal

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VOLUME 87 SPRING 2025

WRITES



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Jenga and other giraffes at the Greater Vancouver Zoo regularly displayed stereotypic behaviours, such as bar biting and abnormal neck movements, in their small and barren enclosure.

Captive animal deaths reignite calls for urgent protections

Late last year, the death of Jenga, a male giraffe at the Greater Vancouver Zoo, reignited calls to better protect animals in captivity. Jenga was only eight years old when he was found deceased in his barn on October 23, while giraffes typically live up to 25 years in the wild. He lived with only two other giraffes in a small and barren enclosure, offering little enrichment or opportunities to engage in natural behaviours essential for giraffes' well-being.

The Vancouver Humane Society (VHS) has called on the zoo for many years to address persistent animal welfare concerns and transition away from keeping animals in permanent captivity. In recent years, a VHS campaign has called on provincial decision-makers to take action and update outdated regulations on the keeping, breeding, and transportation of wild and exotic animals.

Jenga's death gained significant media attention, with coverage from major news outlets and discussions on CBC's *The Early Edition*. VHS representatives expressed concerns to news outlets about Jenga's quality of life prior to his passing, highlighting the challenges of keeping wild, exotic animals in captivity and the stressors they may endure. The zoo has yet to publicly provide a full explanation of the cause of death, prompting calls for an independent investigation.

Jenga's death is not an isolated incident. His death adds to a concerning history of animal fatalities at the facility. Between 2003 and 2015, reports indicate that four giraffes, four

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zebras, two hippos, and two Siberian tigers died at the zoo.

Recent reports have also revealed a troubling pattern of animal fatalities in zoos across Canada. In Calgary, the deaths of several animals at the Calgary Zoo have raised similar concerns. Over the past year, multiple animals have died under the zoo's care, including a western lowland gorilla named Eyare who was injured moving between back-of-house spaces. A polar bear named Baffin drowned after sustaining a bite to the throat. Conservationists have called for a systemic review of the facility's practices, emphasizing the need for increased oversight and transparency.

This past year, multiple animals have died globally as well, including Roxie the red panda who died due to noise stress from fireworks in Edinburgh, and twelve monkeys who died from a bacterial outbreak in a zoo in Hong Kong.

These incidents fuel ongoing debates about the ethics of keeping wild animals in captive environments that may not adequately meet their needs. The recent deaths of Jenga and other captive animals are a sad reminder that although zoo visitors may leave at the end of the day, animals cannot.

For more information on how you can support efforts to protect captive animals, visit the www.vancouverhumane.ca/captivity-petition.



The VHS brings pet first aid into community services



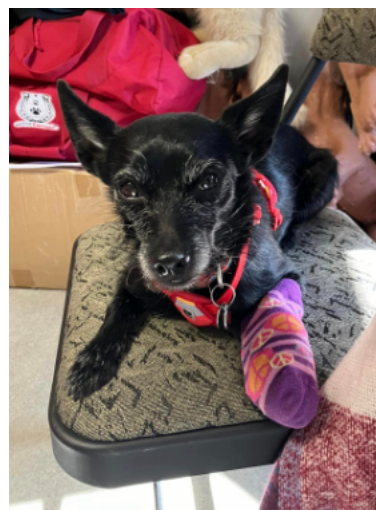
Community services are essential for supporting placed-at-risk individuals, with many service providers trained in first aid and emergency response for people who need them. But what happens when pets in these communities need first aid?

In late 2024, the VHS hosted two pet first aid training sessions for service workers to address the urgent needs of animals in the Downtown Eastside and other communities facing barriers to care. This training ensures life-changing on-the-ground support is offered to pets from low-income families.

Although the bonds between companion animals and their guardians are vital, resources to keep pets healthy in their loving homes are fairly limited. That's because—unlike human services such as medical care—veterinary care and many other vital services for companion animals do not receive government funding.

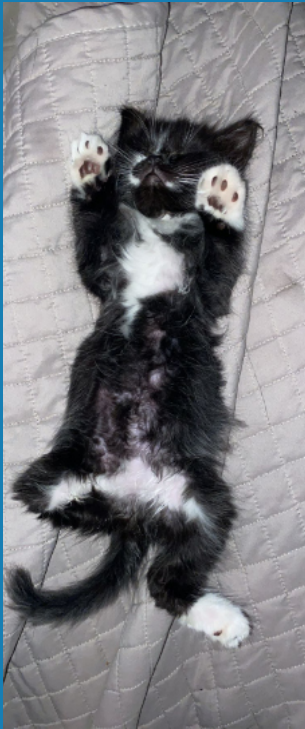
The VHS's McVitie Fund is one of the only services in B.C. providing life-saving funding for veterinary care to help loved pets return home safe.

Now, thanks to training provided by the VHS through Walks 'N' Wags, frontline service providers in the Downtown Eastside can offer early monitoring and immediate care for animals with minor injuries, ensuring more pets receive help when they need it most.



Animals getting the urgent care they need

An update from the McVitie Fund



Kitten Ghost needs surgery for her leg

Adventurous Ghost the kitten was born with a partially developed hind leg. Though Ghost's guardian, Destiny, delights in watching Ghost grow and discover all the wonders of life, it has become clear that Ghost's back leg is making things challenging.

Ghost is struggling to move without splitting open the end of her back leg, which has prompted several visits to the vet to treat the wound. Vets have recommended that Ghost's partial leg be fully amputated, or Ghost will continue to re-injure herself.

Destiny told the VHS that upon adopting Ghost, the pair instantly became best friends. It is heart-breaking for Destiny to see anything get in the way of her beloved Ghost's joyful spirit, and she can't bear to see her friend in pain. With amputation, Ghost will be free to move around on her other three legs without her partial leg getting in her way.

Trying to make everything work while living on a low income, Destiny has already spent all she can spare on Ghost's previous vet visits. With help from the Vancouver Humane Society's McVitie Fund program, Ghost began getting the care she needed right away and will have her surgery as soon as possible.

Can you donate today toward the surgery that will let Ghost get back to playing and living her life pain-free at www.vancouverhumane.ca/ghost?

Frida is back home safe with her guardian, Pedro

Frida is back home safe with her guardian, Pedro!

Reeling from the loss of a few close relatives and having recently immigrated to Canada, Pedro adopted Frida the dog and began to feel he was no longer alone. When Pedro noticed bloody discharge coming from Frida, he knew something was seriously wrong with his companion.

At the vet, it was determined that Frida was suffering from life-threatening complications from a spay surgery done before Pedro adopted her. Though serious complications from a spay surgery are rare and are far outweighed by the risk of pyometra in unspayed animals, there are risks in any major procedure.

Pedro has only been able to find work for a minimum wage and had spent all he could spare on Frida's initial testing when he reached out to the VHS.

Thanks to supporters like you, Frida was able to get the surgery she needed. She is now safely back home, and Pedro tells the McVitie Fund team she is recovering very well. "We are so fortunate," Pedro said.



Chilliwack slaughterhouse ordered to take 'corrective actions' after undercover investigation

In late 2024, disturbing whistleblower footage was released by Animal Justice, revealing shocking suffering at Johnston's Meats, a pig slaughterhouse in Chilliwack, B.C. The undercover video shows panicked and frightened pigs being inhumanely handled, with improper stunning techniques leaving some animals conscious during slaughter.

Despite the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture identifying some concerns, they stated the footage largely depicts "standard practices" in a busy pig slaughterhouse, and no illegal behavior was observed. However, the ministry issued a prohibition notice to Johnston's Meats for improper handling and electric prod use, and ordered corrective actions, including better employee



Photo: Animal Justice

training and increased oversight.

This incident is the latest in a series of near-annual undercover investigations over the past decade that reveal systemic animal welfare issues within B.C.'s animal agriculture industry. It highlights concerns about oversight and enforcement, as provincial

inspectors are required to be on-site daily but failed to identify and report these issues.

The VHS is urging the B.C. government to address the concerning state of farmed animal welfare across the province. Learn more and join the call for urgent changes at www.vancouverhumane.ca/johnstons.

Plant-based food resources take root

The VHS has continued to encourage restaurants and other local small businesses to make plant-based eating more accessible. Right now, 65% of Lower Mainland adults are reducing their meat and dairy intake, giving businesses a great opportunity to meet the growing demand for animal-free meals.

To support restaurants in making these changes, the VHS implemented a new Restaurant Toolkit initiative, which provides a free step-by-step guide with dos and don'ts, tips for recipe and menu development, marketing ideas, and more.

The VHS also launched the new Dairy-Free for No Fee program

to support cafés in removing the extra charge for plant-based milk. This initiative is backed by a research study of 813 participants in B.C., which found that:

- 62% of B.C. customers see surcharge-free options as an inclusive choice, feeling it adds to a welcoming environment. This rises to 73% among those aged 18-34, and 68% among Metro Vancouverites.
- More than 1 in 3 British Columbians aged 18-34 would make surcharge-free cafés their go-to spot, underscoring the strong customer loyalty potential.

- About 1 in 4 (24%) British Columbians say they'd choose plant-based milk more often if there was no surcharge. This rises to 34% among those aged 18-34.
- 32% of British Columbians aged 18-34—a key café demographic—prefer plant-based milk regularly.

Curious how you can help? Find advocacy tools to share with local businesses at PlantUniversity.ca.

Restaurant toolkit: www.plantuniversity.ca/restaurant-toolkit

Dairy-Free for No Fee: www.plantuniversity.ca/cafe

Progress for animals in Port Moody

In January, Port Moody City Council took a significant step to protect animal welfare by banning mobile live animal programs such as mobile petting zoos. The decision came after Port Moody Councillor Kyla Knowles introduced a motion out of concern for the treatment and handling of animals brought into the community and put on display for public entertainment. The VHS, the BC SPCA, and several residents spoke at a January council meeting about the stress and suffering animals endure when transported, displayed, and frequently

handled in unfamiliar environments.

Mobile live animal programs can include a variety of species with a range of different needs, including goats, hedgehogs, snakes, lizards, and turtles. Being constantly moved between events deprives animals of a stable environment, exposes them to unfamiliar and stressful situations that put them and the public at risk of injury and disease spread, and prevents them from engaging in natural behaviours. While mobile petting zoos are often marketed as being educational,

research indicates there is little educational value to them. Instead, these events perpetuate the idea that animals are here for human entertainment and can indirectly promote exotic animals as pets.

This is not the first time Port Moody has taken a stand for animal welfare. In 2023, City Council unanimously voted to ban rodeos after receiving strong support from residents and the VHS. Thank you for caring about animals, Port Moody!

Hastings racing season returns amid ongoing safety concerns



Anstruther was euthanized after sustaining a compound fracture during a race on October 12. Hastings Racecourse official live stream.

As Vancouver's horse racing season is set to return to Hastings Racecourse in April, concerns over horse safety persist following a tragic 2024 season. Last year, four horses lost their lives due to catastrophic injuries sustained during training and racing events, highlighting the ongoing dangers within the industry.

The first fatality occurred less than a month into the season when Lizzie's Rayne, a 3-year-

old horse, suffered a complete fracture of her left hind leg on May 25 and was euthanized. On August 9, Kiki's Song of Life, a 2-year-old, sustained a compound fracture in his left front leg during a workout and was also euthanized. A month later, on September 6, 4-year-old Lucky Cowboy suffered a similar fate after breaking his front leg during a race. The season's final weekend saw the death of Anstruther, a 2-year-old who sustained a compound fracture

to her right hind leg on October 12.

These four deaths followed 11 horse fatalities at B.C.'s two racecourses in 2023, with eight deaths at Hastings and three at Fraser Downs. The VHS continues to advocate against dangerous horse racing events, urging the public to pledge not to attend races at www.vancouverhumane.ca/horse-racing.

Thank you to our donors

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

Karen Shaw, in memory of Polly
Debra Probert, in memory of Statler Probert
Anonymous, in memory of Ruffle & Finn
Kevan Horncastle, in memory of Lynna Brown
Kelly Carson, in memory of Tuffy
Carol Dohan, in memory of Wallace and Gypsy
Leanne and Robert
McConnachie, in memory of Mary Smith
Michele Manthey, in memory of Jeffrey Joudrey
Sheryl Smith, in memory of Gypsy
Jean Aeichele, in loving memory of Bella
Leah Skretkowicz, in memory of Walter
Dale Stromberg, in memory of Mae
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Gina Faigen, in memory of Adam de Levie
Julie Atkinson, in memory of Finnigan
Susan Tha, in memory of Mary Auerbach
Peggy French, in memory of Cole
Val Spears, in memory of Karen Campbell

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Heidi Olson, in honour of Diesel
Robert Della Malva, in honour of Bane and Paige
Melissa Chapman, in honour of Charlie, Maisy, Moe & Elvira
Shelley Badr, in honour of Bailey
Greer Attridge, in honour of Robert Attridge
Donna Langille, in honour of Neal Langille
Carol Dingee, in honour of Jane Sproul

Anonymous, in honour of Megan Evans
Patricia Creed, in honour of Harrison
Ravi Bhatoa, in honour Kotty Wu
Greg Levasseur, in honour of Loki / Nutsy
Mike Roche, in honour of Tyrone & Honda
Li Crossgrove, in honour of animals everywhere
Allison Knodel, in honour of Wynter
Lori Kerr, in honour of Noella
Melanie Conard, in honour of Boone
Randall Paterson, in honour of James Paterson
Kevin Moon, in honour of a world with everlasting love towards every animal

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

All of the businesses that supported the 2024 VHS silent auction
All of the businesses that supported Giving Tuesday
Vecado
Plant Veda
Nora's
Panago Pizza
Pattison Food Group
Casa Lifestyles
Provincial Employees
Community Services Fund
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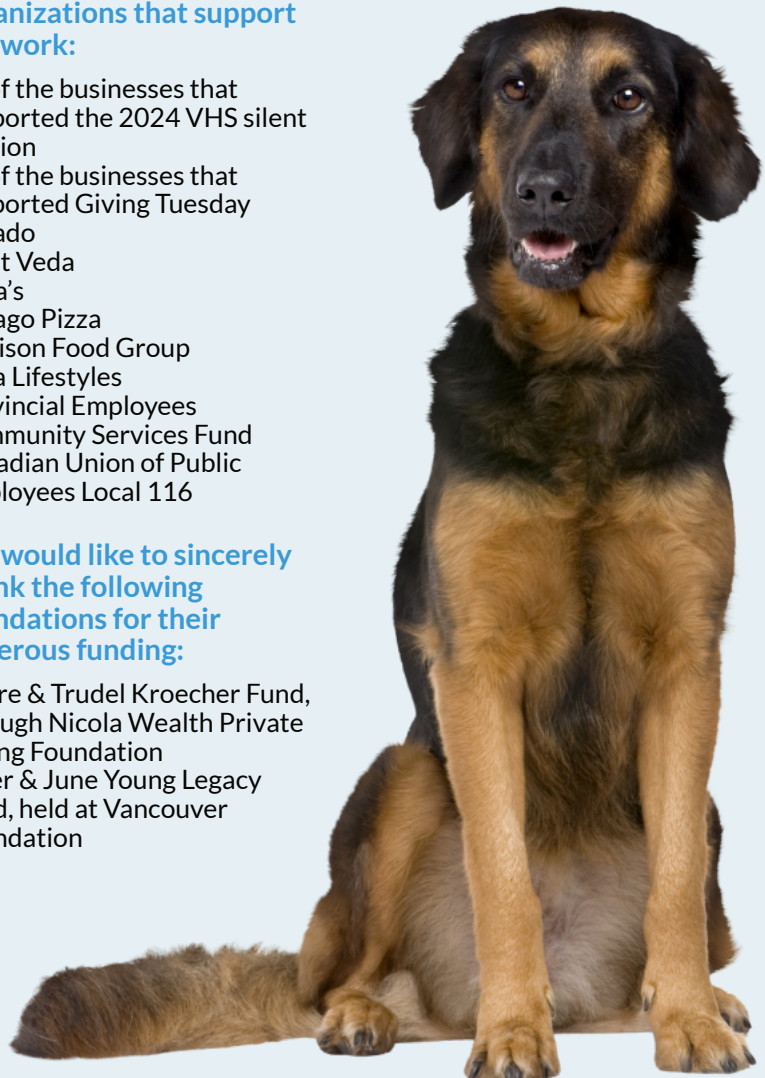
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Thelma's Freedom Fund held at and administered by Vancity Community Foundation
Withers Family Fund, through Nicola Wealth Private Giving Foundation
The Carol & Don Lyster Foundation
The Ian & Rochelle Laing Family Foundation
Timothy C Kerr Family Foundation
The Corcoran Foundation
Choices Markets Kerrisdale

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!



Mark your calendar; the VHS's biggest fundraisers of the year are back!

Because They Matter

The VHS is excited to announce that the 'Because They Matter' fundraising event will return for the fifth year running on Sunday July 20th! You can join the VHS team in supporting animals and their guardians who spend their days on the streets of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside by participating or donating.

More details will be available on the VHS website this spring at www.vancouverhumane.ca/because-they-matter.



Online silent auction

The VHS online silent auction is returning October 16-26! Every purchase of unique, local, plant-based and animal-friendly items or experiences helps to support the VHS's work creating a more humane world for animals. More information will be available on the VHS website this summer.

The VHS is also looking for donations of items! If you have an item or experience that you'd like to donate for the auction, please get in touch.

If you have any questions about either event, or are interested in sponsorship opportunities, please contact the VHS's Development Manager Katrina Leppanen by email at katrina@vancouverhumanesociety.bc.ca or by phone at 604-266-1012.

Leave a lasting gift for animals in need



By including a gift in your Will to the Vancouver Humane Society, you can make a profound difference in the lives of animals. Your bequest is a gift of hope—one that echoes far beyond a lifetime and helps create a brighter, more humane world for animals.

For many years, generous bequests have been at the heart of the VHS's ability to carry out life-saving programs, advocate for meaningful policy changes, and support the animals who need us most.

A simple way to create or update your Will

The Vancouver Humane Society has recently partnered with Willfora to offer a FREE, easy-to-use online tool to help you create or update your Will in just 20 minutes—at absolutely no cost to you. While there's no obligation to include a gift to the VHS, we hope you will

consider leaving a legacy that will impact the future of animals in need.

Together, we can continue to change lives. To start creating your Will or to learn more, visit: give.willfora.com/charities/vhs or contact Claire Yarnold at 604-266-1012 or claire@vancouverhumanesociety.bc.ca

Thank you so much to all who have already generously chosen to leave a gift to the VHS in your Will. Your support means so much.

Try it at home: Roasted vegetable pesto sandwich



INGREDIENTS:

Greens pesto:

- 1 cup fresh basil or a combination of other herbs such as Thai basil, cilantro, parsley or dill, loosely packed
- ½ cup oil
- 1-3 cloves garlic
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 1 cup greens (such as arugula, spinach, or kale), loosely packed

Sandwich:

- 6 ciabatta or Portuguese buns
- 1 eggplant
- 1 zucchini
- 1 bell pepper
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- salt to taste

DIRECTIONS:

Greens pesto:

1. Put all ingredients into blender and blend until smooth. Add more oil as necessary to achieve a thick but pourable consistency.
2. Taste and adjust acidity by adding more citrus if necessary and adjust salt to taste.

Sandwich:

1. Slice eggplant and zucchini into 1-inch thick rounds, and peppers (and optional mushrooms) into thick slices. Spread on a baking tray and drizzle with oil and balsamic vinegar. Do not over-crowd the baking tray (use 2 if needed)
2. Sprinkle with salt and roast at 375°F for about 20 minutes, until veggies begin to soften. Let cool while you prepare the buns.
3. Toast buns if desired.
4. Spread 1-2 tbsp pesto on each bun.
5. Add veggies to buns and top with (optional) hummus, vegan mayo, avocado and/or fresh greens.

This recipe was developed by Andrea Potter of Rooted Nutrition and brought to you by the VHS's PlantUniversity platform. Find more plant-based recipes at www.plantuniversity.ca and see how you can stand up for animals every time you sit down to eat!



VANCOUVER HUMANE SOCIETY
HELPING PEOPLE HELP ANIMALS

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*Listening, learning, and unlearning on unceded
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