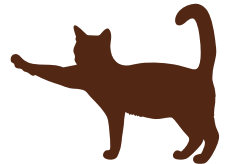


Fall 2025



A Message from CLAW President Karen House



2025's Highs and Lows So Far

With the calendar year rapidly coming to a close, I would like to share some of the ups and downs that have occurred within Bowie CLAW. The first uplifting item was an incredibly generous donation from Grace Lutheran Church. Sadly, the congregation disbanded, but in a final, phenomenal act of charity, what was left in the coffers was allocated to several nonprofits dear to their Congregation Council members. In a very unexpected twist, one of our volunteers was on the board of that church and convinced the group that Bowie CLAW was a worthy recipient! We are truly blessed to have received a very healthy financial donation from these wonderful people. We wholeheartedly thank the Pastor, our volunteer, and the entire membership of Grace for their extraordinary gift to us.

I can honestly say that without this unexpected financial help, we would have been turning away any new intakes as early as August - that higher being really does work in mysterious ways. As of early October, we stand at 286 intakes for the year. Keep in mind that intakes only account for those cats and kittens who spend time in the kennels (to include Petco) and/or in foster homes. To balance that number, we have already accomplished a record 206 adoptions! These numbers do not include the several dogs we have helped or the over 253 TNRs, nor the "here and there" pets that we have helped to get vet care or spay/neuter. As a comparison, last year we adopted out about 222 cats and kittens, so this year is turning out to be a bit busier than the last.

In addition to the usual severe medical cases, we have had to deal with two unusual medical issues in

the past four months and unfortunately, we lost both of those kittens. Our first case, Johnnie, had a very severe case of pectus excavatum where the chest grows inward, pressing on vital organs. We found a veterinarian who had experience with this, but sadly, though Johnnie survived the initial surgery, her heart gave out shortly thereafter. Our next case involved a plucky kitten named Cosmos who overcame several medical issues in her short five months but recently succumbed to a previously unknown problem with her brain stem. Neither of these kittens lacked any care, and their journeys were extremely costly. Not only were our hearts broken by their losses, but our savings were very much depleted.

On a happier note, we have had a great year with

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Mission

Bowie CLAW (Citizens for Local Animal Welfare) is a completely volunteer-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Its purpose is to advocate for the interests and welfare of animals in the city of Bowie, Maryland, and the greater Bowie area. This includes but is not limited to the establishment of a system that insures the care and placement of Bowie's homeless animals and the return of lost pets to their owners.

Message from CLAW President continued

restaurant fundraisers and online donations, as well as some large grants. I want to especially thank PG County Councilmember Ingrid Watson, who again granted us \$4,500 to continue our work in the community. Other significant grants were received from the Strickland Foundation, the Joseph Robert Foundation, Crescent Cities Charities, and the Petfinder Foundation. Additionally, the City of Bowie continues to support our TNR efforts with grants that pay for the spay/neuter of the community cats within the corporate limits of the city. Beyond grants, we have made over \$2,000 thus far on restaurant fundraisers this year.

Even with these grants, we could not stay afloat without our individual supporters contributing on a regular basis. I want to thank each and every one of you for your assistance with donations whether they be financial, food and other products, or your time and effort working for the organization. We are not perfect, and we continue to try to be more efficient, but the bottom line is we accomplish an awful lot for such a small group. It is evident that all our members do their best to care for a whole lot of felines and their families each year. Thank you for being you!

CLAW's Work

- In conjunction with the City's Animal Control staff, operates and maintains the temporary holding room located at City Hall.
- Takes in kittens and adult cats, places them temporarily with fosters whenever possible, ensures that they receive all appropriate medical attention, then adopts them out to their forever homes.
- Places a small number of cats available for adoption at a local Petco, caring for those animals and maintaining their kennels.
- Operates a Trap Neuter Return (TNR) program through which community cats are humanely trapped, spayed or neutered, vaccinated, ear-tipped (physically marked) and returned back to their outdoor homes where they were trapped.
- Complementing TNR, Bowie CLAW assists in the humane management of community cat colonies within the City of Bowie by supporting the daily feeding of these cats by volunteers.
- Operates a Pet Food Pantry that provides food, toys, and cat litter to local residents who are struggling to afford their pets' care.

My CLAW Story

Bethany Shana, a valued and respected volunteer who is known especially for her ability to calm and communicate with stressed cats and kittens, tells us about her work for CLAW.



I moved to Bowie in 2011; I loved that people were dedicated to making Bowie a better place for animals. I had already done TNR in DC, but it wasn't close-by and it wasn't as often as I'd like. So, I was thrilled to see a way to help in my own backyard.

Over the years I have tried every CLAW job: maintained the kennels, socialized, fostered, litter box guru, Petco condo real estate agent, noms dispenser and head scratch giver in charge! Okay, maaaaaybe I'm not in charge, but I do enjoy a fancy title.

My favorite is **Spicy Kitten Wrangler**; nothing is more fun than a hissy baby, and Bowie does provide us with the gamut from sweet red pepper to habanero. Other volunteers say I'm fearless, I think it's more I'm nice ... and stupid because how else do you explain shoving your arm/face into a space with an angry ball of dryer lint, with razor blades on 4-sides to let it know you're friendly? Pretty sure kittens figure I must be harmless if I'm that dumb and who wants to hurt their new hairless friend, bad enough I don't have any fur or claws.

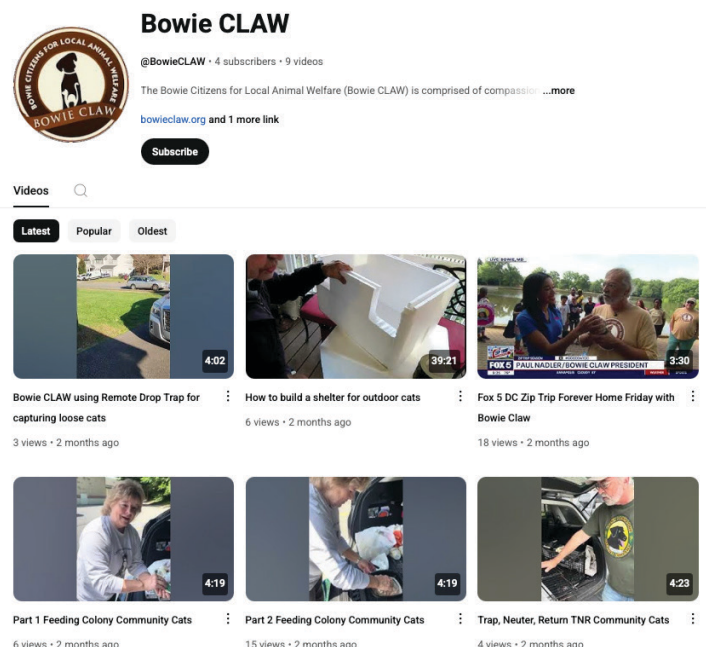
I also help with Animal Control when we have a dog or cat whose people have gotten lost or left them. I've kept a dog for over a year and a half until he passed from age related issues and found amazing homes for dogs that were dumped. From being a stray to kayaking, hiking and going on boats, they got an upgrade in lifestyle.

Volunteering with CLAW helps make families happier. Adding a new fuzzy friend enriches so much in your life, and we take cats from the streets to soft blankets, good food, and safe sunbeams. It's a great feeling knowing you've had a positive impact.

New YouTube Page

Bowie CLAW now has its own YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/@BowieCLAW. It includes several "how-to" videos produced by CLAW as well as two news interviews and clips from Bowie City Council presentations. There is also some legacy content from several years back. And keep your eyes open for a soon-to-be-posted little bit of fun in the form of an educational video about shelters for outdoor cats.

We would like to expand on this collection of videos. If you have a suggestion for a video topic and/or want to volunteer to create a video, please contact **Lauren Semeniuk** (bowieclaw@gmail.com).



Storage Challenge Solved

CLAW had a problem, and it was costing money. As an organization without a facility of its own, obtaining space to store supplies and other materials, such as cat litter and adoption event crates, was a continuing challenge. For a number of recent months, a storage unit had to be rented, but that was not a cost-effective solution to the issue. However, through the support of the City of Bowie, this problem has now been addressed.

Earlier this year the City provided a new shed for the use of the community garden program. When the gardeners vacated their old shed, the City did some refurbishment of it and also constructed a new ramp to its door. CLAW was then given the okay to start using the shed, but first some improvements were made, including CLAW volunteer **Ron Specht** installing solar powered lighting for the interior and building a table for the space. By July, CLAW had moved its materials into the shed, saving the group



Ron Specht and Will Sulima

over \$1,200 in annual storage costs. A huge thank you goes to **Ron Specht, Will Sulima, Paul Nadler** and **Pam Stehmer** for doing the heaving lifting and organization of this wonderful space! And a special thank you goes out to **Nick Spurgeon**, Director of the City's Community Services Department, who was instrumental in making this happen.

Join Us for GivingTuesday – the Global Day of Giving on December 2

On December 2, people all around the world are coming together to tap into the power of human connection to strengthen communities and change our world. Bowie CLAW will be participating in GivingTuesday, and we need your help!

You know about the great work that Bowie CLAW does, and you likely also are aware that we accomplish our mission with financial donations from our supporters and through a team of volunteers. GivingTuesday provides a special opportunity to expand in both of those vital areas.

On December 2, please make a donation. (See ***How You Can Donate.***) You can also support CLAW by becoming a volunteer. (See ***How You Can Help.***) Either – or both – of those actions from you will help to ensure the long-term viability of our organization.

Finally, encourage your friends and family to join you in creating real impact on December 2 by sharing what Bowie CLAW's mission means to you and why you support our organization.

Together as a community, we make a tangible difference in the lives of animals and local families who love them. Thank you so much!



Saving Benji



Although cats and kittens account for the majority of animals that CLAW cares for, it has also focused from its beginning on homeless and lost dogs as well. One of the two holding rooms at Bowie City Hall has space to temporarily house dogs. CLAW works in coordination with the City's Animal Control Officers (ACOs) to care for the animals placed there.

In July this year, some caring citizens found a small, lost dog and inquired on social media for his pet parent. They could

not keep the dog in their own home, and it was a weekend with no ACOs on duty. Bowie Police to the rescue! They brought the pup to the holding room, and CLAW volunteers began caring for him immediately.

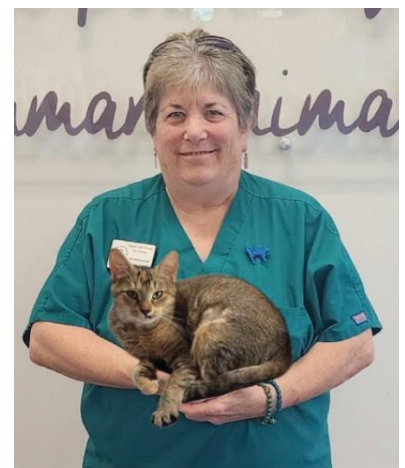
A sweet, gentle dog, he soon won over the hearts of his caretakers, but it was clear that he was underweight and not healthy. After postings on Facebook and on Nextdoor for several days produced no pet parents, CLAW volunteers **Virginia Jones** and her husband **Randolph** took the dog to a veterinarian for evaluation. After a full workup and tests, he was diagnosed with Coccidia and Ehrlichia. Virginia and Randolph agreed to foster him through a month of treatment, after which he was declared clear and well.

Lots of good food, love, and a comfy bed have turned his life around, and at 1.5 years of age, Benji (a Basenji mix) is ready to find his new permanent family. He is energetic, playful, and yet very obedient. Benji is relaxed in his crate for sleep and enjoys his play times in the yard. But his most obvious and enjoyable characteristic is his devotion and attention to his caregiver. The fortunate pet parent who chooses Benji will have a devoted companion all through the day for many years to come. He is now available for adoption from the PGSPCA – the SPCA/Humane Society of Prince George's County.

Once again, the City of Bowie and Bowie CLAW have partnered to save one of the weakest and most vulnerable of its residents.

Happy Ever After for Rosalie

The Summer issue of *CLAW Connections* included the story of beautiful Rosalie, who came to CLAW with an injured mouth and a litter of kittens. We are happy to report that Rosalie has now been adopted by **Jill Weissenbach**, who had been fostering her. Thank you, Jill, and congratulations, Rosalie!



How You Can Help

The work of Bowie CLAW is accomplished entirely through the efforts of volunteers. There is a continuing need for new volunteers in a variety of interest areas, including the following.

-  Foster kittens/cats in your home and show them at adoption events
-  Transport kittens/cats to vet appointments and adoption events
-  Feed and socialize kittens/cats along with cleaning their living spaces at the City Hall temporary holding room and at Petco
-  Humanely trap homeless kittens/cats as part of the TNR program
-  Inventory and distribute food and cat litter in the Pet Food Pantry program
-  Provide support at adoption events and other special events
-  Assist with CLAW's social media and other communications

For more information on any of these opportunities, please send a message to bowieclaw@gmail.com.

Mark Your Calendar!

Community Meeting:

Saturday, November 1, 2025

Bowie Senior Center

14900 Health Center Dr
Bowie, MD 20716

Restaurant Fundraiser:

Wednesday, November 12th

Carrabbas Italian Grill

16431 Governor Bridge Rd
Bowie, MD 20716
(301) 809-0500

Upcoming Adoption Events:

Saturday, November 1st
Petco Bowie

Saturday, November 8th
Petco Gambrills

Saturday, November 15th
Kitty Hall

Saturday, November 22nd
PetSmart Bowie

For latest calendar updates,
follow *Bowie CLAW* on Facebook.

How You Can Donate

To a great extent, Bowie CLAW is dependent upon contributions from individuals to allow us to continue to help as many animals as possible.

Donations (Tax-Deductible: Federal EIN: 26-4494506 and Maryland Charitable ID: 21362) can be made in a number of ways:

-  On our website bowieclaw.org – donate via PayPal, venmo or your credit/debit card
-  Workplace giving: Federal Combined Federal Campaign #15690
-  Online retail giving: iGive.com
-  Mail a check: P.O. Box 116, Bowie 20719

