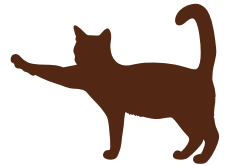




## A Message from CLAW President Karen House

Winter 2026



### Plans for 2026

After our whirlwind 2025, we are currently enjoying a little bit of downtime. As of this writing we have gone a whole four days without any new admissions or kennel residents! We took in a record 362 cats and kittens last year and were able to find furever homes for 305! That is absolutely amazing, but unsustainable for our future.

Today, we have ninety-four cats and kittens in our care. That pretty much fills our available foster space, and many of those are long-timers due to their age or chronic illness. As I look to 2026, I realize this means we will have to make the hard decision to limit intakes this year. Even with increasing our adoption fees to \$150, we are nowhere near able to recoup all the resources we put into each cat in our care, unless you count the absolute joy felt by all involved when an adoption is complete.

For example, a recent vet bill for one kitten's needed surgery exceeded \$1,000. We are committed to the animals we take in and will do whatever we can to make them healthy. That means, though, that we do not have the staff or financial resources to keep up the pace we did in 2025. So, it is with a heavy heart that, barring extraordinary circumstances, we must turn away intakes from outside Bowie City limits, likely for the entire year. We will reevaluate that need in several months.

Our planned activities this year include updating our website, emails and logo. Last year we upgraded some record-keeping using a software called Petestablished, and we plan to continue that activity, incorporating more functions within the software. Also, establishing a standing Fundraising Committee is a primary goal.

While the individuals currently performing those functions do amazing things, we would like to create a formal committee where we can delegate some responsibility, and hopefully engage more volunteers who are not able to do the work in the kennels or at Petco.

Another behind the scenes and unglamorous activity planned for this year is to update our operating instructions and streamline the intake process for new cats and kittens. Our current processes are adequate, but there is always room for improvement, and we plan to make them more accessible. Hopefully, in a year where we are not overwhelmed by new residents, and in a position where we are not forced to build the plane while it is flying, we will have the time to create the critical infrastructure this growing

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*continued on page 2*



### **Officers**

#### **President**

Karen House

#### **Vice President**

Paul Nadler

#### **Secretary**

Jeanne D'Alonzo-Davis

#### **Treasurer**

Virginia Jones

### **Board of Directors**

Michaele Angulo

Jeanne D'Alonzo-Davis

Karen House

Paul Nadler

Joe Puccio

Lauren Semeniuk

Michelene Teston

### **CLAW Connections**

#### **Editor**

Joe Puccio

#### **Design/Production**

Pamelyn Burke

### **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*

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organization needs and deserves.

One question we have been asked recently is whether or not we do dog adoptions. The simple answer to that is no. We do not have the resources to run a dog rescue. While we have some very dog savvy volunteers who foster for other organizations, Bowie CLAW is not in the business of dog adoptions. However, we happily make connections with appropriate rescues when needed, and we work with Bowie Animal Control and other rescues to ensure that a lost dog in Bowie is cared for and finds a safe place to land. In that way, we do assist local dogs as well as cats - we just do not perform canine adoptions.

As always, I am bowled over by the generosity and dedication of our members. From the little thank you's at Christmas, to the really large financial donations our supporters grant us on a regular basis, there is no shortage of kindness within our organization. I am thrilled to be able to contribute to this group especially in a time of turmoil in the world. It is refreshing to be able to see the impact we make on the life of each cat or kitten we encounter. Nothing brings me more joy or satisfaction than to see a cat we have nurtured for months find its forever human, and to see the impact that relationship has on both parties. Welcome to the New Year, Bowie CLAW family!

### **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

A mainstay at CLAW adoption events and as Santa for the organization's annual photo fundraiser, volunteer **David Phillips** shares his story here.



My family and I have lived in Bowie since 2001. I became a volunteer with Bowie CLAW in 2019 after a Mama cat left her litter of four kittens in our back yard. From the trapping of these kittens, their entry into foster family homes, and finally their adoptions, we were introduced to a large part of what Bowie CLAW accomplishes as an organization.

I say that I'm an unofficial "roadie" for our cat adoption events. Before and after each event, I help set up, and tear down, the tables and kennels. Oftentimes I'm a cat whisperer, helping soothe the cats and kittens at the events.

At one of our big events, when we took over Bowie "Kitty" Hall, we had over 20 adoptions in one day! It was seeing the smiles on the faces of the families when they took their cats or kittens home that made the day complete.

I play a very small part in the adoption process, as there are many involved in what we do. But, every year at Christmastime since 2019, you can find me taking part in photos with pets. Besides the numerous dogs and cats, other guests I've seen were a hedgehog, chicken, and even bearded dragons. Those photos posted on the Bowie CLAW social media pages since then display lots of smiles, especially on the pets faces! It's really fun being Santa Paws!

We have had cats in our family for many years. Our oldest cat Maggie, was 21 years old when she passed away, and our Ragdoll cat, named Turtle, was 14 when he passed. At our adoption events, I pass on that information to adopters as they have to know that these pets that they are adopting are going to be a major part of their families' lives for many a year. We currently have two sisters, Fuzzy and Honey, the Bear sisters, who were adopted at a Bowie CLAW adoption event.

## Volunteer Recruitment Campaign

As a nonprofit with no paid staff, CLAW requires a large group of volunteers to meet its animal welfare mission. Maintaining an adequate level of volunteers, though, is a constant challenge.

Your help is needed! If you are a supporter but not currently volunteering, please consider taking that further step. Current volunteers and others can also assist by recruiting others to help CLAW.

### Volunteers are needed for the following roles.

- Feeding and socializing kittens/cats along with cleaning their living spaces at the City Hall temporary holding room and at Petco\*
- Fostering kittens/cats in the volunteer's home and showing them at adoption events\*

- Transporting kittens/cats to vet appointments and adoption events\*
- Humanely trapping homeless kittens/cats as part of the TNR program\*
- Assisting Bowie Animal Control by walking and feeding dogs held at the City Hall temporary holding room\*
- Inventorying and distributing food and cat litter in the Pet Food Pantry program
- Assisting with CLAW's social media communications and fundraising

Please contact Joe Puccio [joepuccio@bowieclaw.org](mailto:joepuccio@bowieclaw.org) for more information or to volunteer!

**\*Volunteers in these positions, must be at least 18 years of age.**



# Animal Control Office and Bowie CLAW

Ever wonder why Bowie CLAW works out of the City Hall Holding Room so much? It is the collaboration and meshing of missions between Animal Control and Bowie CLAW that allows us to utilize this facility. CLAW started as a group of concerned citizens who got together to raise money and awareness of the need to keep local pets out of the county shelter. Even prior to the opening of the Holding Room in 2015, the founding members of Bowie CLAW were working with the City of Bowie and their Animal Control Officers.

Today, in addition to the joint use of the Holding Room, the City of Bowie provides funding for the spay/neuter of cats and kittens that are trapped by CLAW within the city limits. This helps to humanely manage the stray cat population and allows us to help Animal Control to reunite lost pets when we find lost felines via the TNR program.

Within this partnership, there is a strong working relationship between CLAW and the Animal Control Office, which is organizationally part of the Code Compliance Office. The two Animal Control Officers (ACOs), **Angel Miller-McGee** and **Jazsmin Prince**, have a range of responsibilities. They enforce the provisions of the City Code related to animal control and also participate in community education, pet reunification efforts, and public events that promote responsible pet ownership and awareness.

The work of the ACOs intersects most closely with CLAW in regard to stray or abandoned dogs and cats. When a stray dog or cat is picked up by an ACO, an immediate effort is made to identify the owner and reunite the pet with that person. If the owner cannot be identified, the animal is brought to the City Hall temporary holding facility. During the temporary stay for a dog, the ACOs are responsible for its care, which is provided with the assistance of CLAW volunteers. If a dog



Bowie Animal Control Officers,  
Jazsmin Prince (left) and Angel Miller-McGee

is not claimed within several days, it is then transferred to the Prince George's County Animal Services Facility. Because CLAW has dedicated cat foster, adoption, and TNR resources, unclaimed cats from the City Hall holding facility are generally transferred to CLAW for ongoing care and placement when no owner can be identified.

The ACOs and CLAW join forces on other efforts as well, including community pet microchipping events and Kitty Hall events. Both the City and CLAW contribute resources that make this partnership successful, demonstrating how a nonprofit and a municipal agency can collaborate to improve the community and support responsible pet ownership.

# London Finds a New Home



It is heartbreaking all around when a family's pet is surrendered to CLAW, regardless of the reason. It is rough on the family saying goodbye to a part of their life, traumatic to the cat who does not understand the upheaval, and it is tough for the volunteers who have to witness this sadness and deal with the aftereffects on the animal.

London is a recent example. This beautiful gray cat, originally adopted as a kitten from CLAW a few years back,

was returned to us in June of last year. This abrupt transition and loss of all her familiar people and surroundings was shocking for London.

In hopes that this attractive young cat would soon be readopted, she was placed in a condo at the Petco in Bowie, where she could be seen by many potential adopters every day. Unfortunately, this temporary arrangement with all the noise and constantly changing landscape of people and dogs, distressed London so much that she started hissing at everyone. As a result, she was moved to the Holding Room at City Hall, which is much quieter and where CLAW volunteers pampered her.

In addition to feeding her the prescription dry and wet food that she needed to stay healthy, she was afforded a makeshift hiding space tent in her kennel fashioned with a hanging towel. For a few weeks, she spent most of her time behind that towel, but

then slowly started coming out and interacting with the volunteers, enjoying head scratches and generally beginning to trust people again.

In September, she was made available for adoption once more with the note that she would do best in a calm environment with no other cats. Luckily, just the right adopter came along and fell in love with London. They apparently bonded quickly, and the adopter later wrote that the renamed Lady London Fog "... sleeps in bed with me. I put one of her beds in my bed, but she will not sleep in it. She is such a sweet cat, I love her." We are pretty certain that this big-hearted special cat was meant to end up with her new adopter. It seems that the mystical "Cat Distribution System" fixed whatever bug hindered the first adoption, with Lady London Fog and her new family now enjoying their happily ever after.

This petite **1½-year-old girl** is a gentle sweetheart with striking green eyes. She loves pets and attention on her own terms and, while she doesn't enjoy being picked up, she'll happily curl up in your lap when she's ready. She's cat-friendly, great with kids, and dog-familiar — preferring to admire pups from a distance. Calm, loving, and quietly affectionate, she's a wonderful companion for a home that appreciates a soft, sweet soul.

If you have room in your heart and home for Dani, please text **Mickie** for more information: **202-424-9229**

Visit our ***Adoptable Kittens and Cats album*** on Facebook to meet all the sweet faces waiting for forever homes.

## Meet Dani



# 2025 – The Year in Review

2025 was an extraordinarily busy and successful year for Bowie CLAW. Here are some numbers and highlights.

## Numbers

**362** Cats and kittens taken in

**305** Cats and kittens adopted out

**37** Number of adoption events

**541** Cats/kittens trapped as part of TNR program

**\$208,339** Total income, including **\$109,658** in contributions.

**\$202,268** Total expenses

## Highlights

- Board and Officer Changes – Karen House became President; Paul Nadler became Vice President; and new Board members were Jeanne D’Alonzo-Davis and Joe Puccio.
- The tenth anniversary of the City Hall Holding Facility/Kennels was celebrated in a ceremony featuring Mayor Timothy Adams in February.
- Kitty Hall adoption events were held in March, August and November.
- The City made available to CLAW a shed that has addressed a costly storage challenge.
- A quarterly newsletter, *CLAW Connections*, was established.
- A new CLAW YouTube page was created.
- CLAW’s GivingTuesday campaign resulted in nearly \$9,000 in donations.
- In October, a Howl-O-Ween fest was held at Patuxent Nursery.
- A very generous donation was received from the recently disbanded Grace Lutheran Church.
- 13 restaurant fundraisers were held, with over \$2,000 earned.







“Cubbie”

## 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](http://bowieclaw.org) – donate via PayPal, Venmo or your credit/debit card
-  Workplace giving: Federal Combined Federal Campaign #15690
-  Online retail giving: [iGive.com](http://iGive.com)
-  Mail a check: P.O. Box 116, Bowie 20719







**Natalie St. Louis on Pet Food Pantry distribution day**

Bowie CLAW's mission is to focus on the welfare of animals. In some cases, that means supporting the needs of pets through their human "parents" who are facing financial challenges. The organization thus operates its Pet Food Pantry, providing food and cat litter to local residents who are struggling to afford the care of their pets. The Pantry was begun in 2009, shortly after CLAW itself was established.

CLAW works in partnership with the Bowie Interfaith Pantry to approve applicants for support. The qualifications for assistance from CLAW are consistent with the qualifications required by the food pantry. For continuing support, individuals are required to be Bowie residents. Currently, there are 16 clients, with a fairly even division of pets between dogs and cats. Limited as-needed assistance is often provided to those with demonstrated

## CLAW's Pet Food Pantry

needs who are not Bowie residents. For some pet owners, including the elderly, the assistance received from the Pantry enables them to keep their pets instead of making the heartbreaking decision of surrendering them to a shelter.

As with all CLAW programs, volunteers and donors are critical to the success of the Pantry. Pet food and other Pantry items are left in donation bins (see below) and collected by volunteers, while some items come to CLAW on a continuing monthly basis as purchased from online retailers. CLAW is very thankful to all of those who donate.

Although many folks make the Pantry happen, **Natalie St. Louis, Jenny Johnson** and **Paul Nadler** are the main volunteers. They organize the incoming donations in the storage space and ensure that clients receive the items that they need. On distribution days, some volunteers actually transport items to the homes of clients who cannot travel themselves. Help is needed on a continuing basis to both pick up from donation locations and to make deliveries on distribution days. Send a message to [bowieclaw@gmail.com](mailto:bowieclaw@gmail.com) to learn more.

There are donation bins for Bowie CLAW at the following locations:

- Life Companions Veterinary Hospital

- Crunchies in Crofton
- Belair Veterinary Hospital
- The Bowie Senior Center
- The Bowie City Gym
- WowU Salon
- Mom's Organic Market

**FUN FACT** – Paul Nadler, CLAW's former President and current Vice President, first became associated with the organization by volunteering for the Pantry.

## Mark Your Calendar!

### Community Meeting:

**Saturday, February 7, 2026**

#### Bowie Senior Center

14900 Health Center Dr  
Bowie, MD 20716

### Restaurant Fundraiser:

**Wednesday, February 11**

#### Nando's Peri-Peri

1403 S. Main Chapel Way  
Waugh Chapel Towne Center  
Gambrills, MD

### Upcoming Adoption Events:

**Saturday, February 7th**

#### Petco Bowie

**Saturday, February 21st**

#### Petco Waugh Chapel

**Saturday, February 28th**

#### PetSmart Bowie

**Saturday, March 7th**

#### Kitty Hall - Bowie City Hall

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