

HOLIDAY 2025

# ANIMAL CRACKERS



Humane Society of Barron County | [hsbcpets.com](https://hsbcpets.com) | [hsbcpets@gmail.com](mailto:hsbcpets@gmail.com)



## Happy Tail | Gracie & Flora



Gracie (FKA Pepper) and Flora (FKA Coconut) wasted no time settling into their new lives. They became instant buddies on the car ride home, and their bond has only grown stronger since. Together with their new human and their brothers, Raven and Milo, these two are living a life full of adventure. They've already traveled to Denver and Santa Fe, with many more destinations on the horizon! Gracie came to us as a young Siamese mama with a litter of kittens and surprised us soon after by revealing she was expecting again. After lovingly raising back-to-back litters and spending 16 weeks in our care, she finally found the fresh start she deserved—side by side with Flora, a kitten she had a paw in raising. We wish Gracie and Flora safe, joyful travels and a lifetime of love on the road. Happy Tails, little explorers!

### OUR MISSION

Assist in the reduction of pet overpopulation, while improving the lives of homeless animals through quality care, adoption, education and advocacy.

### OUR VISION

Create communities where every companion animal has a safe and loving forever home and people value animals and treat them with respect and kindness.

In this issue:

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- 2025 Year in Review
- 2026 Comedy Night - in the works!
- Tails and Tires - Special Thank You
- Community Resources
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## A Year In Review

Dear Friends,

As 2025 comes to a close, we at the Humane Society of Barron County are reflecting on another year of hope, hard work, and countless wagging tails—all made possible by you.

Across the nation, shelters are facing a perfect storm: a record number of animals in need, longer shelter stays, and skyrocketing veterinary costs. Here at HSBC, we receive an overwhelming number of requests every single day from people desperate for help—lost pets, strays, and animals their families can no longer care for. Veterinary expenses continue to climb, and animals are spending longer periods in shelters before finding homes. With the costs of food, medication, and supplies also on the rise, every day of care counts more than ever.

One of those animals was Charlie Waffles, formerly known as Spot. Charlie came to us as a stray, his past a mystery. What we did know was that he was one of the kindest souls we'd ever met—a Certified Good Boy™ who sat politely for treats, wagged at every visitor, and melted hearts with his gentle manners.

For 71 days, Charlie waited patiently, hoping someone would see what we saw: a dog ready to start a new life. Then, one lucky day, his forever family walked through our doors—and Charlie's new life truly began. Now semi-regionally famous as "Charlie Waffles, the Medicare Mutt," he even has his own swag and social media fans who follow his adventures. These days, Charlie rides to work with his new humans, greets everyone he meets with that same trademark grin, and enjoys all the belly rubs he could ever want. His story reminds us that every single day of care—and every act of kindness—can change a life.

Then there's Claude and Chloe, a pair of 9-year-old cats who had spent their entire lives together before being surrendered to HSBC when their owner had to move somewhere pets weren't allowed. Claude was the outgoing one, while Chloe preferred to hang back and observe. Finding a home for bonded pairs can be challenging, but we were determined to keep them together. After 68 days in our care, they finally found their perfect match — a loving home where they could stay side by side, just as they always have.

These are just two of the hundreds of stories you make possible each year. But with rising costs and more animals depending on us, we need your help to keep saying "yes" to as many animals in need of a second chance as possible.

That's why our 2025 Year-End Campaign goal is \$20,000—to cover critical medical care, nutritious meals, and safe shelter for animals like Charlie Waffles, Chloe and Claude.

Every dollar brings us closer to a future where no animal is left behind. Please consider making your special year-end gift today and help us continue giving animals the love, care, and shelter they deserve.

With gratitude and hope,

Rachel Fitzgerald  
Executive Director  
Humane Society of Barron County



### A Note of Thanks.

A special thank you to Wieckowicz Law office for donating printing supplies and resources to support HSBC's communication efforts.



# Get Ready To Laugh!

Hold onto your funny bones—  
HSBC's 4th Annual Comedy Night  
is just around the corner!

We're cooking up all the  
hilarious details and will spill  
the beans SOON!

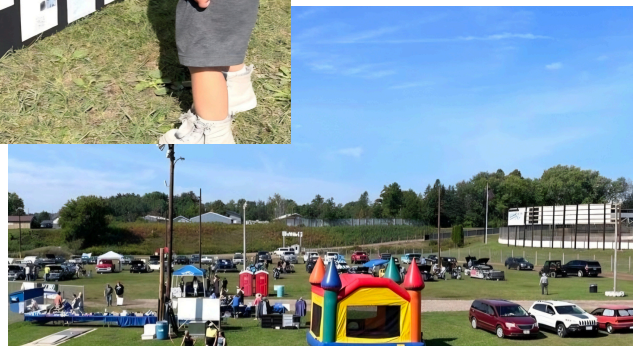


We had a blast revving up the excitement  
at the **Tails and Tires Motor Show** in  
September!

The Rice Lake Speedway was the perfect  
pit stop for our festivities, and we're  
already gearing up for even more fun next  
year! Huge thanks to our turbo-charged  
sponsors:

Cameron Vet Clinic  
Cars on 8  
Chetek AutoBody  
Chetek Lanes  
Hair Garage  
Mosaic Technologies  
State Farm's Ashley Headley  
Swant Graber  
Thomas Precision  
Wieckowicz Law Office  
Barron Electric  
BC Construction  
Casey Watters Realty  
Echo Bay Resort

***We couldn't do it without your help!***





## Fantastic Pet Safety Tips for the Holidays from the AVMA

The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) provides a variety of tips about pet safety for the holidays in a great article you can find here:

<https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/pet-owners/petcare/holiday-pet-safety>

Their tips include:

Pre-planning, such as posting emergency phone numbers or bookmarking online resources for veterinary care and poison control can help if there is a problem.

Protecting your pets from holiday food that can really hurt them is a must! Sweet foods, unbaked yeast dough, and chocolate top the list, but check out the article for more information!

Decorations can cause deadly issues for pets. Tinsel and ornaments, holiday plants and candles are a few of the common hazards, but there are more!

Hosting gatherings with a pet may mean lots of education for your visitors and guests. The article discusses some great tips for protecting your pets that will help you have a little less holiday stress!



Hey you, yeah  
you! Join us at one  
of our upcoming  
events.



### Upcoming Events

Board Meetings are held the second Thursday of every month at 6 PM, at Chetek City Hall. Board meetings are open to all members .



## Cold weather tips for furry family members

- Remember, **if it's too cold for you, it's probably too cold for your pet**, so keep your animals inside! Pets can freeze -- even inside a car!
- Keep your home humidified and **towel dry** your pet as soon as they come inside. Pay close attention to their feet and remove any snow chunks from between their toes or foot pads to prevent skin damage.
- Massage petroleum jelly or other **vet-approved paw protectants** into paw pads before going outside to protect from salt and chemical agents. **Booties** can provide even more coverage and can also prevent sand and salt from getting lodged between bare toes and causing irritation. Use **pet-friendly ice melts** whenever possible.
- **Never shave your dog down to the skin in winter.** A longer coat will provide more warmth. If your dog is long-haired, simply trim them to minimize the clinging ice balls, salt crystals and de-icing chemicals that can dry their skin, and don't neglect the hair between their toes. If your dog is short-haired, consider getting them a coat or sweater with a high collar or turtleneck with coverage from the base of the tail to the belly.
- **Bathe your pets as little as possible during cold spells.** Washing too often can remove essential oils and increase the chance of developing dry, flaky skin.
- Thoroughly clean up any **antifreeze spills**. Like coolant, antifreeze is a **lethal** for dogs and cats. Be sure to thoroughly clean up any spills from your vehicle, and consider using products that contain propylene glycol rather than ethylene glycol. Additionally, cold weather chemicals like ice melts can be dangerous when ingested, so always be mindful and keep chemicals up and out of paws' reach.
- Pets burn extra energy by trying to stay warm in wintertime. **Feeding them a little bit more** can provide much-needed calories, and making sure they have plenty of water to drink will help keep them well-hydrated and their skin less dry.
- For inside, a **cozy dog or cat bed** off the floor and away from drafts is perfect.
- **Never let your dog off leash on snow or ice**, especially during a snowstorm. Dogs can lose their scent in the snow and easily become lost. More dogs are lost during the winter than during any other season, so make sure your dog always wears an **ID tag**.
- Be sure to keep these tips top of mind this winter so that you and your furry friends can stay warm, cozy and safe.

## Shelter Needs

It might seem like we run on pure love, but caring for animals costs money too! Did you know we don't receive any county or state funding? HSBC wants to place every animal into a forever home and we need your help to make that happen.

## Shelter Wishlist

- Squeeze Cheese
- Lick Mats
- Cardboard Cat Scratchers
- Science Diet Sensitive Stomach Cat Food
- Exam Gloves (M&L)
- Toilet Paper
- Zip ties
- Envelopes
- Postage Stamps
- Gift Cards

chewy.com



amazon



Scan with your smartphone camera or QR scanner to see wishlists.

Donations can be made via:  
[www.hsbcpet.com/donate](http://www.hsbcpet.com/donate)

PayPal



# PAWLTIDAYS HAPPY



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## Donate to HSBC

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

In ☐ honor ☐ memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

### Donation Amount:

☐ \$25

☐ \$50

☐ \$100

☐ \_\_\_\_\_  
other

☐ Cash ☐ Check ☐ Card \_\_\_\_\_ Exp \_\_\_\_\_ CVV \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I'd like more information on volunteering with HSBC ☐ Shelter Work ☐ Fundraising  
☐ Fostering ☐ Other

Mail to: Humane Society of Barron County, 1571 Guy Ave, Barron, WI 54812  
or visit [www.hsbcpet.com/yearend](http://www.hsbcpet.com/yearend)