



# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT



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# LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LAUREN BRINKMAN

Each day, I have the privilege of feeling a deep sense of purpose. In a world where so many difficult things are happening, it gives me hope to work alongside compassionate supporters, volunteers, and staff members who are committed to making the world a better place for animals.



In Underdog's 13 years, there has been a natural rhythm of "polishing up" years and "growth" years. 2025 was a polishing year focused on streamlining processes, developing relationships, and preparing to grow our staff, all while settling into our new building. Even so, we grew. Our new clinic, which we moved into in late 2024, filled quickly. Our third doctor's schedule was booked almost immediately. We built it, and our community showed up.

2025 set the stage for what will surely be a busy 2026. We have set a goal of being on the road three to four days a week with our mobile veterinary clinic. An experienced veterinarian is joining us from Florida and is excited to serve rural areas of our state that lack access to spay and neuter services. It means a great deal to know we will be better serving Wisconsin while strengthening our partnerships with shelters. **We can accomplish so much more together than we can individually.**

Collaborating with shelters beyond Wisconsin is something we have done for many years, and in 2026, we plan to deepen our partnerships with southern U.S. shelters we transfer animals from. We continue to see just how critical spay and neuter services are in reducing pet overpopulation. This is the most effective way to reduce the euthanasia of healthy animals. While transferring pets from the South to Wisconsin saves lives and creates space for additional intakes, it has become clear that we cannot adopt our way out of this crisis. Spay and neuter is essential, and we are committed to being part of that solution.

2025 was filled with joy, with so many lives saved through adoption and so many pets helped through our veterinary services. Every day, I am grateful to do this work thanks to the community we have built together at Underdog. **Thank you** for being such an important part of it.

*Lauren Brinkman*

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# VISION & MISSION



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## → Vision

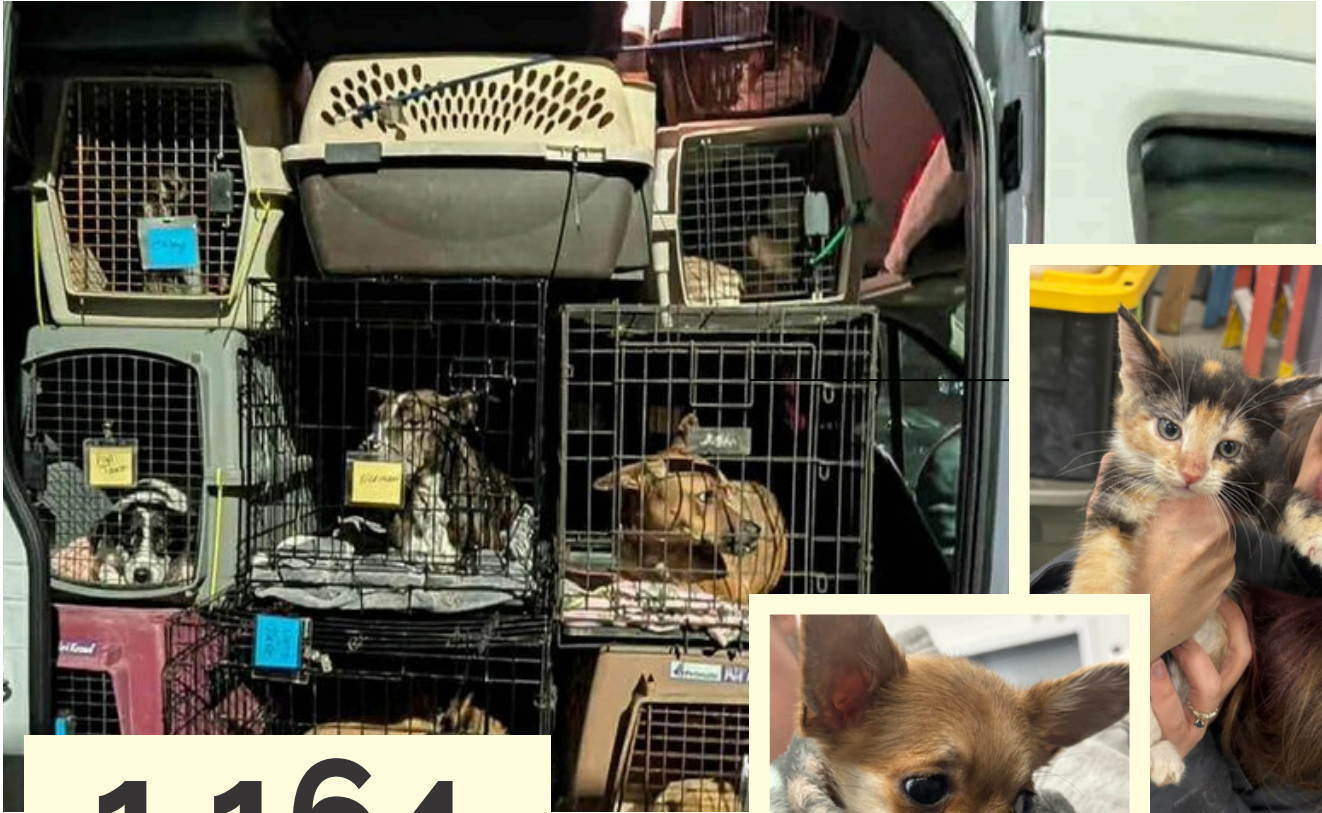
A world where every pet is a beloved companion, supported by accessible care and a compassionate community.

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## → Mission

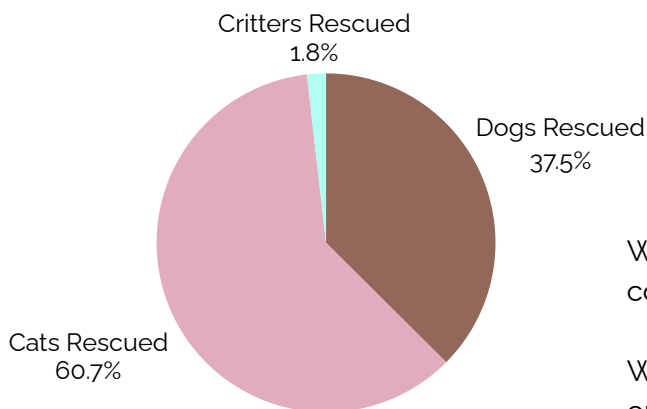
Our mission is to find permanent homes for animals in need, and to enrich lives by strengthening the connection between animals and people through community services and outreach.

# RESCUES & TRANSPORTS



# 1,164

Total Intake in 2025



We partner with high volume shelters in rural communities who are dealing with pet overpopulation.

We are fortunate to have resources, like veterinary care on-site and a larger adopter pool in Madison. We transfer in pets from Tennessee, Oklahoma, Alabama, Georgia, and from within Wisconsin and Illinois.

# GRANDMA GERTIE'S STORY

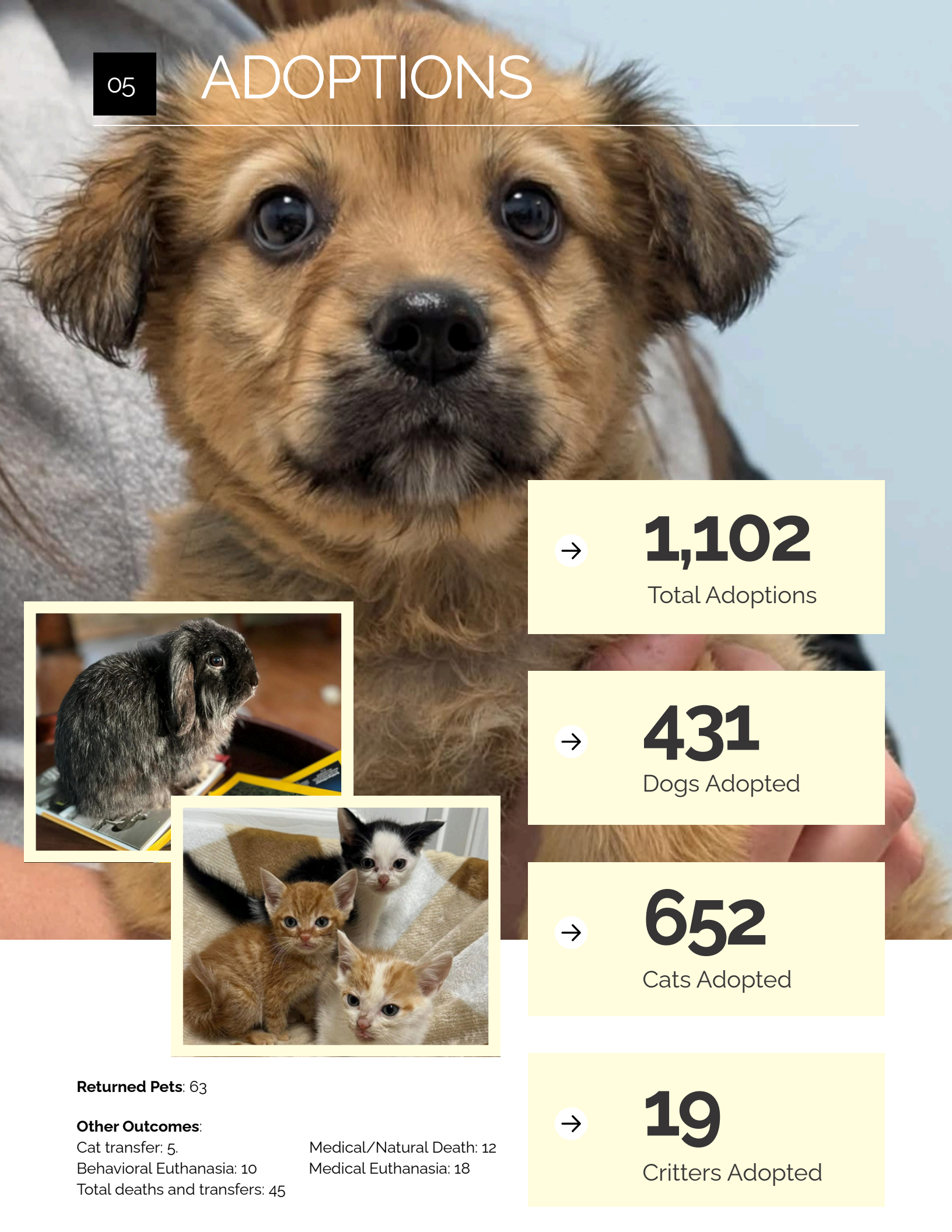
Grandma Gertie Houndbottom, a senior dog, came to Underdog as part of a large-scale cruelty case involving more than 20 dogs. Not all survived, but Gertie did. When she arrived, she was underweight, fearful, and in need of extensive medical care. Even in those early days, her gentle nature was clear. With support from the Underdog community, dedicated veterinary care, and the stability of foster and adoptive homes, Gertie experienced safety and consistency for the first time.

As her medical needs were addressed and her confidence grew, Gertie began to settle into a life that once seemed out of reach. Her new family shared that it seemed like Gertie started aging in reverse as her health issues were managed.

Today, Gertie's life reflects that beautiful transformation. She spends her days taking long woodsy walks at Picnic Point, enjoying new experiences like her first boat ride, and settling into snuggle sessions with her people. She has formed a close bond with her canine sister, Laney, and her story shows what is possible when care and compassion come together.



# ADOPTIONS



# 1,102

Total Adoptions



# 431

Dogs Adopted



# 652

Cats Adopted

**Returned Pets:** 63

**Other Outcomes:**

Cat transfer: 5

Behavioral Euthanasia: 10

Total deaths and transfers: 45

Medical/Natural Death: 12

Medical Euthanasia: 18



# 19

Critters Adopted

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# MEEKO'S STORY



Meeko, a former stray with lifelong health issues, waited more than 10 months to find a home. As a medically complex cat, she was often overlooked, but her story changed when Sara and David came across her profile. They had recently said goodbye to their beloved cat Annie, an Underdog alum, and chose to honor her by welcoming another pet who had been waiting. They said yes to Meeko, giving her the chance she had been waiting for.

In her new home, Meeko quickly showed exactly who she was. Her family shared that she brought fun and plenty of sass into their household, describing her as playful, smart, and able to cuddle with the best of them. She became obsessed with her toy springs, sending her humans on regular "seek and find" missions under the stove and refrigerator to recover her hidden treasures. She also formed a close bond with their dog, Vinny, and the two spent mornings chasing each other around the house.

Meeko's story reflects the impact of committing to animals who wait the longest, showing how the right match can turn time spent waiting into a joyful, lasting connection.



→ 4,397

Wellness Exams Performed

Underdog's veterinary clinic provided comprehensive, accessible care for pets across our community. From preventative services to advanced medical treatment, our team delivered high-quality care while removing barriers for the people and animals who need it most.

**Preventative & Routine Care**

Wellness exams, vaccinations, and early detection services help pets stay healthy and prevent more serious conditions.

**Diagnostics & Treatment**

In-house lab work, ultrasound, and digital X-ray allow our team to diagnose and treat illnesses quickly and effectively.

**Dental Care**

Dental cleanings and extractions relieve pain and improve long-term health and quality of life.

**Surgical Services**

Spay and neuter surgeries, along with more complex procedures, expand access to critical surgical care within our clinic.

# SHARBI'S STORY



Sharbi came to Underdog as a transfer from a Wisconsin shelter. She had been an outside dog in a rural area and suffered from a mouth full of rotting teeth and chronic ear infections. The shelter she was at didn't have the means to do additional testing and hoped we would be able to help this true Underdog.

Upon arrival, Sharbi's teeth were cleaned and some were extracted. Her ears were cultured, and our vet team tried a number of different antibiotics, even having some compounded especially for her. After months of Sharbi seeming uncomfortable, we determined that a TECA (Total Ear Canal Ablation) was the best chance at helping her live a pain-free life.

Our veterinarians trained, and we purchased the instruments needed to perform this procedure. We did one ear at a time, and after recovering from her second surgery, Sharbi's demeanor changed. She had always been a sweet dog, but it was clear she was able to feel free and happy once her ears were no longer causing her pain.

Now our doctors are able to offer this procedure to other animals in need, and Sharbi is loving her life in her forever home.

# SURGICAL IMPACT



In 2025, we provided essential surgical care across our community, with a strong focus on spay and neuter to reduce pet overpopulation.

Total Surgeries Performed

→ **1,932**

Surgeries for Underdog Animals

→ **945**

Surgeries for Public Clients

→ **808**

Surgeries for Partner Rescue Animals

→ **179**

# WANDA JO'S STORY

Wanda Jo came to Underdog for what was expected to be a routine wellness exam and spay surgery. She had struggled to gain weight but otherwise appeared healthy enough to proceed. During surgery, Dr. Lenore noticed something was not right. Wanda Jo's stomach felt firm and unusually shaped, prompting an immediate shift from a standard procedure to an emergency exploratory surgery.

What the team discovered was remarkable. Forty-six hair ties were packed inside her stomach! They had collected over time and were silently impacting her health.

Because of that intervention, Wanda Jo, now known as JoJo, got the second chance she needed. She recovered in her adoptive home, where her personality quickly came through. JoJo's story reflects the critical role of Underdog's onsite veterinary clinic, ensuring that even animals with complex or unknown medical needs receive the care they need to recover and thrive.

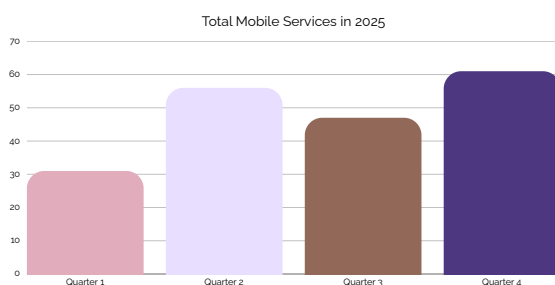


# MOBILE CLINIC



## Expanded Services

In 2025, Underdog's mobile clinic expanded to deliver both surgical and wellness services directly to communities across Wisconsin.



→ **195**

Total Mobile Services Provided

→ **184**

Mobile Spay & Neuter Surgeries

# STREET DOG COALITION



- Monthly clinics were held in 2025
  - 4 hours/clinic

- Over **250** pets served in 2025

Pets are served with wellness services and access to spay and neuter at no charge to clients. Clinics are focused on providing wellness care and supplies to pets of people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

# FUTURE OUTLOOK

We will continue to **listen to our community** and **meet our clients where they are at**. We know that a major part of what is needed in Madison and Wisconsin as a whole is **affordable veterinary care**.



Through continued learning and partnerships, we will be doing the following:

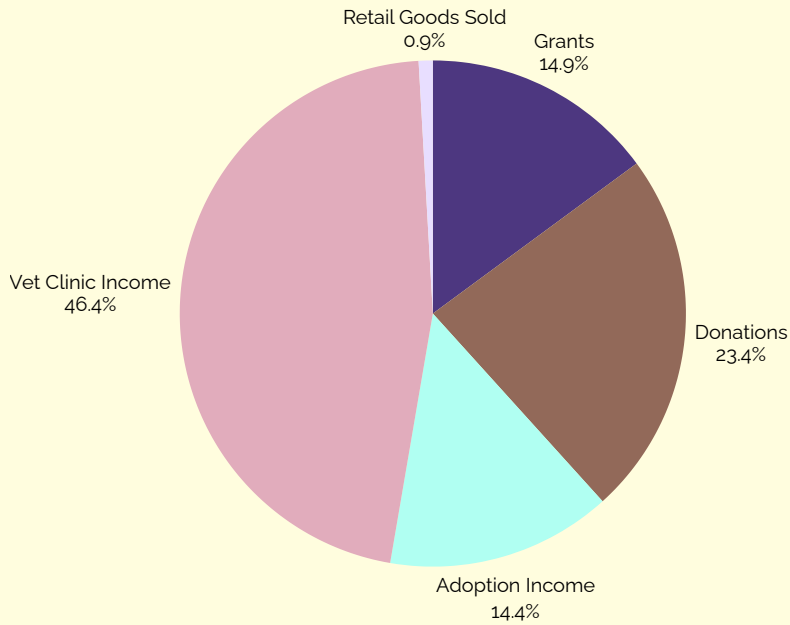
- Weekly visits to shelters throughout Wisconsin to provide spay and neuter services to shelter pets and community members who cannot otherwise access services
- Hiring additional veterinarians to increase availability for surgical and wellness care (3 full time to 5 full time—one specifically dedicated to mobile clinic work)
- Adding walk-in urgent care services to meet the community need
- Working to increase our foster base so we can save more lives each month
- Collaborating with local affordable veterinary providers to keep our ear to the ground on what services are needed so we can best serve our community

## → Grants We Received in 2025

- **Grey Muzzle:** \$15,000 to provide free diagnostic tests for senior dogs whose owners can't afford recommended testing at appointments
- **Athletes for Animals:** \$1,000 toward access to care efforts
- **Maddie's Fund:** \$65,000 for Mindray Ultrasound and Staff Training
- **Petsmart Charities Accelerator Grant:** \$150,000 to scale up access to care efforts
- **Petsmart Charities Adoptions Grant:** \$40,000 to increase adoptions in store
- **Green Bay Packers Grant:** \$4,000 for medical equipment
- **Banfield Foundation Grant:** \$5,000 toward access to care efforts
- **ASPCA NTSI Annual Fund Planning Grant:** \$4,000 for fundraising education and conference

# FINANCIALS

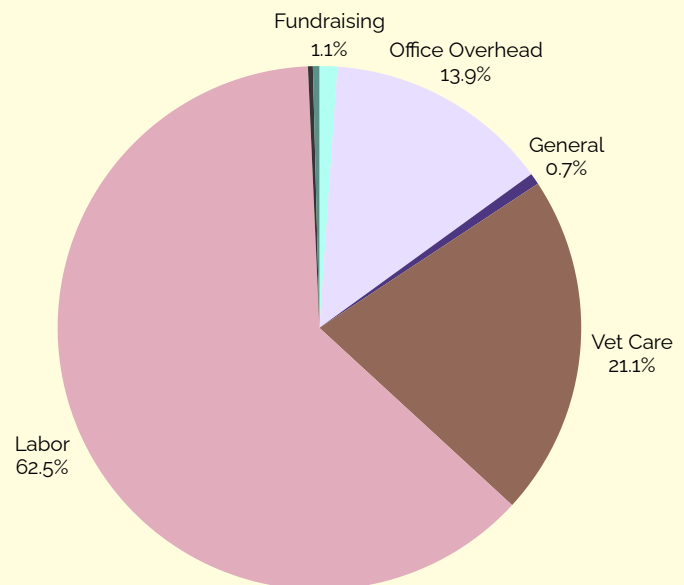
## Income Report



|                     |                |
|---------------------|----------------|
| → Vet Clinic Income | \$767,441.98   |
| → Adoption Income   | \$237,156.74   |
| → Donations         | \$387,031.68   |
| → Grants            | \$245,900.00   |
| → Retail Goods Sold | \$14,921.79    |
| → Total Income      | \$1,716,934.73 |

## Expense Report

|                                  |                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| → Labor Expenses                 | \$871,489.95   |
| → Vet Care Expenses              | \$294,465.51   |
| → General Operating/<br>Supplies | \$9,824.94     |
| → Office Overhead                | \$194,699.60   |
| → Cost of Retail<br>Goods Sold   | \$4,805.05     |
| → Marketing/<br>Advertising      | \$5,412.94     |
| → Fundraising                    | \$15,171.05    |
| → Total<br>Expenses              | \$1,395,869.04 |



# THANK YOU!

[www.underdogpetrescue.org](http://www.underdogpetrescue.org)

