



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
ANIMAL FRIENDS RECEIVES \$150,000 GRANT FROM PETSMART CHARITIES TO EXPAND ACCESS TO VETERINARY CARE

Funding Will Help Pittsburgh-Area Pet Families Access the Affordable Veterinary Care They Need

PITTSBURGH, PA (May 5, 2026) — Animal Friends has received a \$150,000 Accelerator grant from PetSmart Charities to help more local pet families access affordable veterinary care.

A recent PetSmart Charities–Gallup State of Pet Care Study revealed that 52 percent of pet parents have skipped or declined veterinary care, largely due to financial concerns. This funding will support Animal Friends’ affordable veterinary clinic by strengthening staffing, improving clinic efficiency and supporting operational investments that reduce barriers to care, including preventive services, vaccines and spay and neuter surgeries.

Through this grant, Animal Friends is expanding access to veterinary care earlier — before minor health issues escalate into medical crises — helping families stay together with the pets they love.

“This grant strengthens our ability to provide affordable, accessible veterinary care while ensuring the long-term sustainability of our clinic,” said Victoria Kolodziej, CVT, Director of Clinic Services at Animal Friends. “By reducing barriers to care and expanding our capacity, we can help prevent crises, ease financial strain and keep more pets healthy and in their homes.”

50 million pets across the U.S. lack access to the veterinary care they need. In 2023, [PetSmart Charities](#) responded to that reality with a commitment of more than \$100 million over five years to dismantle the financial, geographical and logistical barriers standing between pets and the care they deserve. Through its [Accelerator grant program](#), PetSmart Charities supports nonprofit and low-cost veterinary providers working to expand services and reach more families in need.

““Pets are family, and access to veterinary care is critical in ensuring they stay healthy and remain in their loving homes,” said Aimee Gilbreath, president of PetSmart Charities. “When care is declined or skipped due to finances, small medical issues can become serious and far more expensive. We’re proud to partner with Animal Friends to help create practical, sustainable goals that meet the needs of their community.”

Tin Tin’s story began during a period of personal crisis. His original owner was facing significant mental health challenges, and during that difficult time, Tin Tin suffered a serious leg injury. When his

owner was unable to provide the urgent medical care he needed, she made the difficult but loving decision to rehome him so he could get help.

A new adopter welcomed Tin Tin into her home and brought him to Animal Friends Clinic when his injury continued to worsen. Veterinarians diagnosed a fractured leg and began treatment immediately. Early veterinary care ensured Tin Tin's condition was addressed quickly — before his pain became life-limiting.

When it became clear the fracture would not heal, the clinic compassionately performed a leg amputation, relieving Tin Tin's pain and giving him the opportunity for a comfortable, active future. Support from the previously established Save My Pet fund helped cover essential care and recovery costs, ensuring his family was not forced to choose between financial hardship and his wellbeing.



Through timely, accessible veterinary care, Animal Friends Clinic helped prevent a crisis and kept Tin Tin safe, supported and right where he belongs — with his loving adoptive family.

About Animal Friends

For more than 80 years, Animal Friends has continually set – and raised – the bar for humane programming in the Pittsburgh region. Our 75-acre campus serves as a center of compassion and hope for thousands of homeless pets annually. As a full-service companion animal resource community, Animal Friends provides tens of thousands of affordable services each year and impacts more than 200,000 lives through veterinary care, humane education, pet behavior classes and a regional pet food bank. Animal Friends is proud to continue to save lives — simply put, because it's what we do.

Learn more or make a donation at ThinkingOutsideTheCage.org.

Follow Animal Friends on Instagram: [@animal_friendsinc](https://www.instagram.com/animal_friendsinc)

Follow Animal Friends on Facebook: [Facebook.com/AnimalFriends](https://www.facebook.com/AnimalFriends)

Follow Animal Friends on YouTube: [YouTube.com/AnimalFriends](https://www.youtube.com/AnimalFriends)

About PetSmart Charities

PetSmart Charities is committed to making the world a better place for pets and all who love them. Through its in-store adoption program in all PetSmart® stores across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, PetSmart Charities has helped more than 11 million pets find loving homes. PetSmart Charities also provides grant funding to support organizations that advocate and care for the well-being of all pets and their families. Its efforts connect pets with loving homes, improve access to affordable veterinary care, and support families in times of crises with access to food, shelter, and disaster response. Each year, millions of generous supporters help pets in need by donating to PetSmart Charities directly at PetSmartCharities.org, while shopping at PetSmart.com, and by using the PIN pads at checkout registers inside PetSmart® stores. PetSmart Charities efficiently uses more than 90 cents of every dollar donated to fulfill its mission, granting more than \$600 million since its inception in 1994. The organization is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that has received a Four-Star Rating from Charity Navigator each year consecutively since 2003 — placing it among the top one percent of rated charities.

To learn more or make a donation, visit PetSmartCharities.org.

Follow PetSmart Charities on Instagram: [@PetSmartCharities](https://www.instagram.com/PetSmartCharities)

Follow PetSmart Charities on Facebook: Facebook.com/PetSmartCharities Follow PetSmart

Charities on YouTube: YouTube.com/PetSmartCharitiesInc

Media Contact

Cindy Cole

Chief Communications Officer

Animal Friends

ccole@ThinkingOutsideTheCage.org

412-847-7072