



Critter Chatter

A publication of Pender County Humane Society, a no-kill animal shelter.

penderhumane.org · 910.259.7022

Remembering Gloria Johnson, Pender Humane Society's President Emeritus

By Norma Troutman

Pender County Humane Society (PCHS) is deeply saddened to share the passing of our beloved President Emeritus, Gloria Johnson. Gloria passed away peacefully in her home on Oct. 7.

Gloria served PCHS for approximately 20 years, starting out in 2000 as a dog walker. She and her husband Don teamed up to walk dogs, help with the Fall and Spring Shelter cleanups, organize fundraising events, and lead the fundraising drive to raise \$100,000 to build the current PCHS Shelter.

Gloria's "duties" went from dog walker, to Secretary, to President and then to our President Emeritus after the death of her husband. To the many PCHS volunteers and friends, Gloria was a favorite with her chattiness, kindness and cheerful nature. She was our ambassador, always greeting newcomers and continually telling others about PCHS and requesting their involvement with aiding the animals.

Several of Gloria's major accomplishments were not only raising \$100,000 to build the current Shelter, but also being one of four people who started the Wilmington Fur Ball. The Fur Ball was originally created to raise funds for PCHS, but as it continued over the years it was expanded to not only benefit PCHS but to also give funds to other no-kill animal rescue groups. With her vision of a formal gala, the Fur Ball is now in its 18th year with more than \$375,000 given out to approximately 20 animal rescue groups.



Gloria and Don Johnson with their dog Milo.

For many of us who worried constantly about the Shelter and the animals within our care, Gloria would calmly remind us that "there are angels everywhere; do not worry, they will come." And yes, she was right. Many of you over the years have given your time, talents, and money to PCHS. **You** are the angels Gloria talked about.

The Shelter can only keep its doors open and continue to save our best friends with support from our community. Please reach out to us today at penderhumane.org.

We will always remember you, Gloria. It is now time for you and Don to enjoy all your best friends that preceded you over the rainbow bridge. Gloria's unwavering dedication, compassion for all animals, and tireless commitment to our mission have left a lasting legacy that will continue to inspire us for years to come. Her love for animals and this organization was unmatched, and her impact will be felt throughout our community forever.

See page 4 for another tribute to Gloria Johnson.



From the President's Desk

By Denise Gable

As 2025 Comes to a Close – Thank You!

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we start the new year, the Board of Directors of Pender County Humane Society wants to take a moment to express our deepest gratitude for your steadfast support throughout 2025. Your commitment to our no-kill animal shelter has been instrumental in helping us achieve our mission to improve the lives of homeless and unwanted animals by providing shelter and medical care while finding loving and responsible permanent homes.

As you may know, we are a 501c3 non-profit organization that depends completely on your donations and proceeds from our For Our Furry Friends (FOFF) Thrift Store in Burgaw. We are **not** associated with the Pender County Animal Shelter and receive no county, state or federal government support.

As we reflect on the challenges and triumphs of the year, we are reminded of the incredible impact that collective generosity can have on our community. With your continued support, we were able to place more than 40 dogs and cats into loving, forever homes in 2025. Next year, with your support, we hope to help many more.

The end of the year marks a critical time for charitable giving. Not only does it provide an opportunity for reflection and gratitude, but it also allows us to make a significant impact on our medical care, adoptions and spay-neuter programs for the upcoming year. Your contribution has the power to create lasting change and shape a brighter future for the animals in our care.

Here are a few ways you can make a difference in 2026:

- One-Time Donation: Your one-time contribution can provide immediate support.
- Monthly Giving: Consider becoming a monthly donor to provide consistent support for our

ongoing efforts. Even a small monthly donation can add up to a significant impact over time.

- Matching Gifts: Check with your employer to see if they offer a matching gift program. Your donation could be doubled, maximizing the impact of your generosity.
- Donation of stocks, bonds, or other assets to offset taxable income.
- Bequests made in your Last Will and Testament.

To make your tax-deductible donation, visit our website at penderhumane.org, mail your donation to PCHS, P.O. Box 626, Burgaw, N.C., 28425, or contact me at gabledenise@verizon.net.

Thank you for your unwavering support. Together, we can change the lives of even more homeless and unwanted animals.

Wishing You a Happy and Healthy New Year!

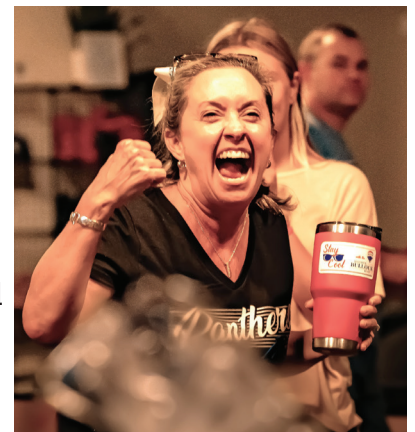
Warm regards,

Denise Gable, *President*
Sharon Meeker, *Secretary*
Paula Africa, *Member-at-Large*
Becky Borneman, *Member-at-Large*
Deborah Mussolino, *Member-at-Large*

Our Supporters are the Best! **Many, many thanks to:**

Jennifer Bullock and Team at RE/MAX Executive in Wilmington for their \$2640 donation from their Third Annual Pet Costume Pawty at Wilmington Brewing Company on Sept. 16. Also, thanks to the team at Wilmington Brewing Company for hosting and for their donation.

The team at **Caliber Car Wash** in Hampstead for their \$1120 donation from their "Clean for a Cause" event held Aug. 22-24.



Help Rizby Find a Home!

Rizby is a four-year-old pitbull with a big heart and an even bigger smile. He was found in very rough shape on the side of the road in Pender County, but thanks to the miracle workers at our shelter, he is now thriving.

Rizby is heartworm-free, neutered, fully vaccinated and microchipped, and ready for a fresh start! Rizby loves people, especially kids, and is full of playful energy. He's not a fan of cats and may need slow introductions to other dogs. He would probably do best with an experienced handler to keep up the amazing progress he's made with professional trainer Jeff Coltenback.

We'd love to find Rizby a forever home – or even a foster – to keep him moving forward and living his best life. If interested, please call the Shelter at 910.259.7022.



Before



After rescue



New Member Recruitment – We Need You!

Want to make a difference in the lives of homeless and unwanted animals in Pender County? The Pender County Humane Society is looking for animal-loving people interested in volunteering with our organization in several capacities, including working on fundraising or social media, helping with administrative tasks.

We need people who want to lead committees and work with the Board to keep our organization moving forward. We cannot survive without new members getting involved, and even a few hours a week or a month can make a huge difference!

If interested in learning more, please contact me at gabledenise@verizon.net.

REMINDER: Pender County Humane Society is a no-kill shelter. We are a 501(c)3 organization and are **NOT** affiliated with Pender County Animal Control or Pender County government, and we receive **NO** county, state or federal funds. We exist on proceeds from our For Our Furry Friends (FOFF) Thrift Store, also in Burgaw, as well as generous contributions from our corporate sponsors, and **you**, our supporters.

Need Help Feeding Your Pets?

We know times are tough, and more and more owners are surrendering their pets because they can't afford to feed them. Pender County Humane Society's pet food pantry can help! Our pet food pantry has both dog and cat food available free of charge. Anyone in need of food will be asked to fill out a brief form and show proof of income or proof of government assistance.

Forms are available at the Shelter located at 1407 NC-53 in Burgaw, or on our website at www.penderhumane.org. The Shelter is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to noon. For more information, please call the shelter at 910.259.7022.

Help Us by Donating Food to Our Pet Food Pantry

We are always in need of donations for our pet food pantry. Help us help those less fortunate in our community by donating any brand of wet or dry dog and cat food, cat litter and treats. Donations can be dropped at the Shelter, located at 1407 NC-53, Burgaw, between 9 a.m. and noon daily, or at Coral Cottages Boutique, 14061 NC-50 in Surf City. We thank you for your support!



Gloria Johnson: An Inspiration to All of Us

By John A. Valente, PCHS Past President, 2017-2025

I was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Gloria Johnson. She was the heart and soul of Pender County Humane Society from the time she and Norma Troutman founded the organization until her passing.

It was an honor and a privilege to know and work with Gloria. I first met her when PCHS was looking for an emcee for the Fur Ball in 2009. She impressed me with her compassion for the animals, and her dedication to finding them forever homes.

I worked with PCHS in several capacities and Gloria was such a driving force for the organization as the President. She was always involved with shelter cleanups, spay and neuter, FOFF Thrift Store, spaghetti suppers, running the raffles, and just about anywhere she was needed. She often got up very early to go on WECT TV to promote the fostering and adoption of our animals. Her spirit and dedication to the health and wellbeing of the animals was an inspiration to us all.

When PCHS faced a crisis in 2014, with most of the Board resigning, Gloria and Norma took decisive action to keep the organization alive. I was honored when Gloria asked me to become a Board member, and because of her dedication to the animals and her compassion for them, it was an easy decision for me.

By 2017 Gloria had significantly cut back on her daily involvement with PCHS to care for her husband. She asked me to run for President, and with her support I was elected. At that time, she limited her activities to the spaghetti supper and raffle, and the spay/neuter program, and supported other activities when possible.

In late 2022, the Board decided to honor Gloria by electing her as President Emeritus of PCHS. As such, Gloria continued to provide leadership and guidance to the Board of Directors. Gloria remained a valued member of the Board whose experiences were an asset to all of us. The Board had a surprise dinner for her in December 2022 to present her with her honorarium.

Gloria was also an integral player in the purchase of the FOFF Thrift Store and associated buildings from October 2022 to the closing in March 2023 and the subsequent renovations and improvements.

When long-time Board member Bernie Zikos passed, Gloria led the effort to dedicate the lobby of the Shelter to honor him. She gave a very emotional speech and then hung the plaque in the lobby for every visitor to see.

We will all greatly miss Glora, but her spirit lives on in everyone associated with PCHS, and in the performance of the mission she created. She set an example that will be difficult to match.



Gloria Johnson and former PCHS President John Valente.

If you are mailing in your donation, please use this form:

Please cut and insert this form with your tax-deductible donation.

Mail to: PO Box 626, Burgaw, NC 28425

Phone: 910-259-7022

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-Mail: _____ Phone: _____

Total Tax Deductible Donation Amount: \$ _____

To donate online go to www.penderhumane.org/donate.html

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING OUR FURRY FRIENDS!