



Donors overwhelm Grosse Pointe Animal Adoption Society on Betty White's birthday

By: [K. Michelle Moran](#) | [Grosse Pointe Times](#) | Published January 26, 2022



A stray female cat named Woody, under the care of the Grosse Pointe Animal Adoption Society, gave birth to three kittens the night of what would have been Betty White's 100th birthday Jan. 17.

Photo provided by Grosse Pointe Animal Adoption Society



Thanks to multiple donations of pet food during the #BettyWhiteChallenge, the Grosse Pointe Animal Adoption Society now has enough food to keep its shelter pets fed for a month.

Photo provided by Grosse Pointe Animal Adoption Society



During the #BettyWhiteChallenge Jan. 17, the We Are Here Foundation brought pizza and antipasto salad — donated by Gilbert's Lodge in St. Clair Shores — to the staff and volunteers at the Grosse Pointe Animal Adoption Society in Harper Woods.

Photo provided by the We Are Here Foundation

HARPER WOODS — Iconic actress Betty White might be gone — she died Dec. 31, just shy of her 100th birthday Jan. 17 — but her legacy is going strong.

White was known for roles in TV shows like “The Mary Tyler Moore Show,” “The Golden Girls” and “Hot in Cleveland,” as well as movies like “The Proposal,” but when she wasn't exercising her acting chops and demonstrating her exquisite comic timing, White was an advocate for animals. To honor her memory, White's legions of fans were encouraged to take part in the #BettyWhiteChallenge Jan. 17 by donating to the animal organizations of their choice. One of the beneficiaries of this social media challenge was the nonprofit Grosse Pointe Animal Adoption Society, whose animal shelter and office are in Harper Woods.

GPAAS Executive Director Corinne Martin said they received enough donations Jan. 17 to cover a month's worth of veterinarian bills for animals in the care of GPAAS' Thomas A. Mackey Animal Adoption Center. The total amount raised, at press time, stood at just over \$9,000, according to GPAAS. The roughly 500 donations ranged from \$1 to \$300 and came in response to a Facebook post from Camp Bow Wow in St. Clair Shores, which encouraged its patrons to take part in the #BettyWhiteChallenge by giving to GPAAS. Martin said she and the shelter's small staff and volunteers were overwhelmed and stunned as gifts steadily rolled in.

“We had such a response to it, (and) we didn't even advertise for it,” Martin said. “So many people love Betty White that it just took off.”

GPAAS Social Media Director Lauren Feldman echoed that sentiment.

“All of our staff were so shocked and overwhelmed with gratitude through the whole day,” Feldman said by email. “It was really something else.”

Donations weren't the only gifts GPAAS received Jan. 17. Martin said a number of other people sent pet food through the online pet product website Chewy.

“It was stacked up in the hallway,” Martin said of the bags of cat and dog food, which she said equated to a month's worth for the shelter animals. “We didn't expect it. It was spontaneous. It was an amazing thing to happen in 24 hours.”

The Mount Clemens-based nonprofit We Are Here Foundation chipped in, as well. We Are Here Foundation founder Thomas Cleaver said they brought pizza and antipasto salad — which was donated by Gilbert's Lodge in St. Clair Shores — to feed GPAAS staff and volunteers at lunch Jan. 17.

“Being an animal lover, it was a no-brainer,” Cleaver said of his nonprofit's decision to support the #BettyWhiteChallenge. “Corinne over there is an angel, and all of the volunteers over there are angels.”

Cleaver said it was his organization's latest effort to show support for GPAAS. Last summer, he said, they outfitted the Mackey Center with all-new office furniture, filing cabinets and the like, thanks to donated furniture from Staples. The We Are Here Foundation also recently supplied all-new furniture

to the new Grosse Pointe Public School System administrative offices at Grosse Pointe North High School in Grosse Pointe Woods, also thanks to donated materials from Staples, which helped to design the school system's office cubicles, too, Cleaver said.

While they receive gifts of new furniture and office supplies from Staples, as well as gently used office furniture from other businesses, Cleaver said the We Are Here Foundation still has operating expenses, mostly in the form of the rental trucks they use to deliver furniture to schools and nonprofits in southeast Michigan.

"Our programs are fully funded by donated boats and cars," said Cleaver, who said they repair them and sell them to raise money for initiatives such as the annual Nautical Coast Clean Up.

For more information on the We Are Here Foundation or GPAAS, visit their websites at www.weareherefoundation.org or www.gpaas.org.