



Lil's Thrift Shop
Lake Lure, NC

2025

IMPACT REPORT



Lil's Thrift Shop

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Lil's Thrift Shop

2025 Impact Report

www.lilsthiftshop.org

Table of Contents

A tailwagging purpose

Our new mission statement
Numbers will share the story

1

Current events

Check it out...what a surprise in December!
Always in the know

2

Our partners' passions

Every little bit counts
An ounce of prevention
Keeping families together

3

Why Lil's?

Why do people thrift?
Putting U in Lil's community
The "secret sauce"

4

Generosity Unleashed

2025 Fundraising & Grants
Cue the fireworks for grand total!

5

Transactions & thanks

Trans(formational) actions
Thank you! You're the cat's meow!

6

What's next in 2026?

Our 2026 plans (& requests)

7

OUR MISSION

In 2025, we updated our mission statement to better reflect the bigger picture of Lil's Thrift Shop and the growing impact we're making together.



SUPPORTING ANIMAL CARE

Lil's Thrift Shop

OUR MISSION:

***to transform
secondhand treasures
into first rate care
for vulnerable animals.***

We raise funds and awareness for local animal focused nonprofits through our vibrant community of generous donors, thrilled shoppers, & dedicated volunteers.

#CATSELFIE

WWW.LILSTHRIFTSHOP.ORG

COUNT ON US

No, these aren't the winning lottery numbers... but for those of you who like fun facts, read on to see how these numbers represent the happenings at Lil's Thrift Shop in 2025!

1,523,487	122k	4,876	85,835	6208	51	54,383	25		
							1,215	50	
5,249	65k	5,000	42	50k	2,398	150,684	11	60	
			5	15	720	12	34	72	203



There's a surprise in those envelopes!

CHECK IT OUT

Our 5 nonprofit partners work tirelessly (seriously, do they sleep?) for animals—caring for those in rescue, guiding fosters, finding new “forever” homes, supporting pet owners, and educating the community to create lasting change in Rutherford County. Real progress happens when behavior shifts and financial resources are available, which is why Lil’s consistent support matters. That support gives our partners confidence, momentum, and hope—knowing we’ve got their backs.

You may have been among the 6,208 Facebook views of the heartwarming video from our December appreciation gathering, where volunteers watched our partners’ surprise as they each opened a check for \$10,000. That’s right—to round out the year, we gave out \$50,000 in one joyful moment. (Keep reading, though, because that was only a portion of the total we gave!)

IN THE KNOW

Another way Lil’s amplifies impact is by sharing our partners’ work and showing you how to support them beyond shopping. Many of you have “met” them this year through Facebook posts, our new e-newsletter, or by volunteering alongside them directly. We highlighted pets looking for homes through our weekly LAP: Lil’s Adoptable Pets feature, while partner events—spay/neuter clinics, fundraisers, vaccination clinics, and heartwarming rescue stories—were sprinkled throughout the year. Our partners have certainly been busy!



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EVERY LITTLE BIT COUNTS

Did you know that one unspayed female cat could easily have a dozen kittens in one year? Our partners work every day to stop that cycle by removing barriers to spay and neuter services.

Pets Are Worth Saving (PAWS) provides medical transportation for over 50 animals a month to get spay/neuter & other care. The **Rutherford County**

Humane Society (RCHS) focuses on saving cats and kittens, finding loving homes, and supporting TNR (Trap Neuter Release) for feral populations.



AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION

Disease and illness remain major causes of euthanasia. You know the saying—an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. While a large dog can take heartworm prevention for \$50/month, treatment for heartworms can cost from \$500 to over \$1000. Our partners advocate for preventative and proactive medical care, including lifesaving vaccinations that protect both animals and the community.

KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER

Many animals entering rescue are not strays. Rising costs of food and veterinary care are forcing families to make heartbreaking decisions. Rutherford County is home to more than 65,000 residents, and approximately 15% live below the federal poverty level—often creating barriers to veterinary care and increasing emergency situations. Pet service costs are 42% higher than in 2019, and food prices have risen 22%. For some families, those increases can mean surrendering a beloved companion.

Community Pet Center (CPC) helps prevent that loss through a pet food bank and education programs—keeping pets where they belong: with the families who love them. When more pets are surrendered, it places additional strain on partner organizations that are already stretched thin finding adopters and foster homes for animals in their care. **RCHS, Heart of the Foothills (HFAR), and Southern Paws Animal Rescue (SPAR)** help fill these critical sheltering needs.

With the December check from Lil's, SPAR told us they replaced 11 kennels, purchased two heaters and a pallet of food, and began concrete improvements—creating safer, warmer spaces for animals waiting for their second chance.

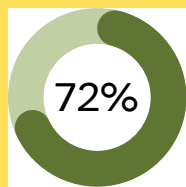


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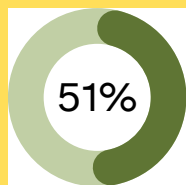
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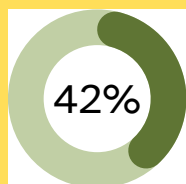
WHY DO PEOPLE THRIFT?



to save money



the fun of finding
a good deal



love discovering
unique, one-of-a-
kind items

Why Lil's?

**Because our prices are low
and our hugs are free.**

Whether you've shopped at Lil's once or once a week, you know you can find all these reasons and more. Shoppers and donors build relationships with volunteers. Visitors consistently describe the shop as friendly, fun, organized, and welcoming. And since everyone can watch their *change make change*, generous donors keep bringing us unique & useful items to sell.

Our shoppers even cheer for each other when someone finds the perfect treasure. One regular went the extra mile in 2025 for her fellow bargain hunters—after reading wish-list cards at checkout, she went home and pulled some of those items from her own cabinets and closets so we could fulfill wishes.

To brighten the holidays, we welcomed Santa, the Grinch, & the Holiday Snow Globe—bringing in over \$10,000 in seasonal joy. Lil's brings happiness through discovery: those small, surprising moments that turn an ordinary day into a memorable one.

PUTTING "U" IN COMMUNITY

Some of Lil's best customers shop from the comfort of their own homes. We now have 2,398 Facebook followers, and clearly, our social media team shares what people want to see.

In 2025, our posts received more than 1.5 million views, highlighting our partners' lifesaving work and showcasing thrifter-approved new arrivals. Come join the fun!

THE "SECRET" SAUCE

But wait! There's more! The truth is, Lil's Thrift Shop doesn't just support animals, partners, shoppers, or donors—it also nurtures friendships, purpose, and fulfillment among our volunteers.

A neighboring business owner often stops by trying to figure out our "secret sauce."

**The answer is simple:
we love what we do,
who we do it with, and
why we're doing it.**

In 2025, 34 volunteers gave 4,876 hours in the shop, plus countless hours from our board. The value of that service to our community is truly priceless.

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Lake Lure, NC

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GENEROSITY UNLEASHED!

Speaking of priceless, one day, a young boy came into the shop hoping to spend his quarter for the dogs and cats. Though disappointed the candy machine was gone, he still dropped his **25** cents into our change jar. Another visitor leaves **\$100** bills wherever he goes—and we were grateful to see proof of his visit there as well. Together, those spare coins, small bills, and “two cents’ worth” donations added up to over **\$5,000!**



We were also *thrilled* to receive two unrestricted grants: **\$5,000** from the *Ambinder Family Trust, Community Foundation of Central Florida* and **\$25,000** from the *Lance H. Kwasniewski Donor Fund, dedicated to Pam Quinn and Lance Kwasniewski*. Finally, all the parties at the Paws for the Cause Celebration plus the silent auction of dozens of donated products & services resulted in another **\$54,383!**

CUE FIREWORKS FOR GRAND TOTAL!

We all felt like it would be an incredibly heavy lift to come even close to 2024 results given how well we did last year, in addition to the lingering impacts Helene left on our community. Local businesses struggled mightily to stay afloat in 2025, with traffic down as much as 50% in most areas. Lil's results certainly bucked the trends as well as our own conservative expectations.

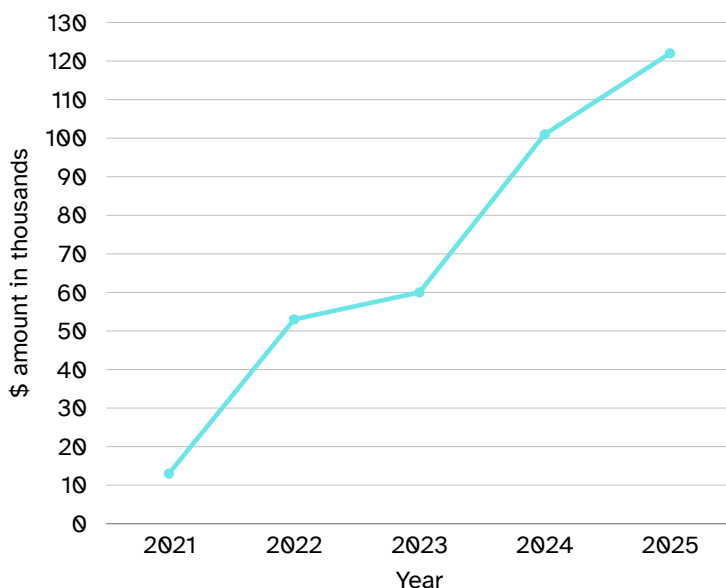
Thanks to generous donors, thrilled shoppers, and dedicated volunteers, we closed 2025 with a **record-breaking income of \$150,684**—a 15% increase over last year.

Of that total, \$122,000 was sent out to our nonprofit partners--

a 42% increase over the \$85,835 we sent them last year. Including our \$15K to Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach last year, our \$122k in grants in 2025 resulted in an increase of 21% to 2024.

To put this in perspective, look how we've grown in the past 5 years! In 2021, we gave partners a total of \$12,881. In 2022, \$53,200. In 2023, \$59,710, and in 2024, \$100,846.

Funds given by Lil's to nonprofits



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TRANSACTIONS THAT TRANSFORMED

Fueled entirely by volunteers, we were open 203 days for a total of 1,215 hours, completing 5,249 transactions. But more than just transactions, we see them as **trans(formational) actions**. Each opening of that change drawer represented belief in the power of community to make a difference—to make someone's day, to give new life to family treasure, to keep something out of a landfill, to feed a hungry dog, to prevent a kitten from becoming a momma cat, to give and get a hug on a random afternoon in a small mountain town. 5,249 times...card swipes, checks, and even spare change became lasting change.

thank
you!



THE CAT'S MEOW!

Quite often, people who volunteered with Lil “back in the day” will share the history of the shop’s beginnings. They tell us stories of the lady who loved cats so much that she used to answer her phone, “meow!??” They always smile and say something along the lines of, “she would be so proud of what this shop is doing for the animals.” We’re grateful to YOU for making us look so good.

Our mission is
to **transform**
secondhand
treasures into
first rate care
for vulnerable
animals.



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Lil's Thrift Shop 2026 GOALS



Lil's Thrift Shop

www.lilsthriftshop.org

find a new home in lake lure



Gift

Please contact us immediately if the numbers at the beginning of this report did indeed help you win a lottery. (& it can't hurt to ask...do you have commercial space you'd like to gift to Lil's?)



Grant writer

We need someone who can write grants as well as leads on possible grants to pursue.



Golfers

Our inaugural golf tournament (Lil's FORE! Legs Scramble on April 9 at Rumbling Bald on Lake Lure) will help fund our partners as well as our move.

add to the Lil's volunteer team

1 for new location

We will need more volunteers for our new location, as we hope to expand hours.



2 for new pickups

We desperately need more people with muscle (truck/trailer is a bonus, but not necessary) so we can continue to offer free furniture pickups.

support partners

Continue to highlight their lifesaving work & share opportunities to engage with them.

Connect with them regularly to see what their ongoing needs are.

increase our reach



So many of our sales come from shoppers who find us online. Please help us reach 3000 FB followers in 2026!

SIMPLE THINGS YOU CAN DO TODAY:



donate

consider a monthly auto draft

give

share your household goods

shop

online or in the store

follow

social media, website, & e-news (& share!)