

IMPACT REPORT



You donate, shop, & save at Lil's
so our partners can save animals.



Lil's Thrift Shop

2024

A message from Lil's

In our tiny mountain town of Lake Lure, Lil's Thrift Shop is a space where animal lovers make a real difference. It's where wildly generous people donate household goods and money, thrifting geniuses know where to find the best treasures, and (but wait, there's more!) everyone gets to save! How? Thanks to your contributions, our nonprofit partners are able to save the lives of cats and dogs.



In fact, 100% of our net proceeds go to these dedicated animal champions in Rutherford County, NC: Community Pet Center, Heart of the Foothills, Pets Are Worth Saving (PAWS), Rutherford Co. Humane Society, and Southern Paws Animal Rescue (SPAR). They all work tirelessly to ensure animals have the health, homes, and happiness they deserve.

Lil's Thrift Shop is staffed entirely by volunteers, and we take great pride in the impact Lil's has had on animals and on our community. Of course, we couldn't do it without our partners and "pawsome" people like you!

A year with unique challenges

Our October 2023 remodel set the stage for an exciting start to 2024. Thanks to your encouragement and support, we ended 2023 with our most successful year ever—gaining more awareness, increasing Facebook traffic, welcoming more volunteers, and

seeing higher sales and donations. One visitor even called us “the friendliest, cleanest, and best thrift shop” she had ever been to!

Building on that momentum, 2024 was shaping up to exceed all expectations. By August, we had already surpassed the record-breaking income of the previous year.

Then, in September, our small town was hit by Hurricane Helene, causing widespread devastation across Western NC. Many of our neighbors, including some of our volunteers, lost nearly everything. While the road to recovery may be long, the people of Western NC are strong, and Lil's stands with our community as we face this challenge together.

As soon as power was restored after the storm, our volunteers sprang into action without hesitation. We transformed the shop into a temporary distribution center, offering free furniture, household goods, and basic necessities (including food for animals) to those who had been displaced.

Since our nonprofit partners were receiving lots of help for immediate animal needs, they encouraged us to focus on families, some of whom were struggling to care for their pets in the aftermath of the storm. In response, we repurposed our annex into a Christmas Pop-Up Shop, where we raised over \$15,000 for the Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach. This local nonprofit has been providing food and emergency financial assistance to families in Lake Lure, Chimney Rock, and surrounding counties since 2010. They were incredibly grateful for the funds we raised on behalf of the Lil's community.

2024

Sales: \$96,541
(up 38% from 2023)

Financial donations:
\$35,538 (up 172%)

All told, we had a record-breaking 59% increase for a total income of
\$132,079!

And the most exciting news of all? We also issued record-breaking grants...

& in 2024, Lil's gave away \$100,846!

\$85,834
to our **nonprofit partners** &

\$15,012
to **Hickory Nut Gorge Outreach!**

2021:

Became 501(c)(3) nonprofit.
Income: \$67,682 &
Distributed: \$12,888.
(Lower amount due to vetting process of potential recipients.)

2022:

Income: \$78,533 &
Distributed to partners:
\$53,200.

2023:

Income: \$82,975 &
Distributed to partners:
\$59,710.

Total funds donated in 2024: \$100,846!

Because of the variety of support you gave, the EXTRAORDINARY animal crusaders we are proud to call partners were able to provide for hundreds of dogs & cats, including:

- **Low cost spay/neuter, rabies, and vaccination clinics**
- **Emergency veterinary care**
- **Adoption fairs; Pet of the Week; foster opportunities**
- **Free food & pet supplies**
- **Feral cat programs (trap, neuter, release (TNR))**
- **Transportation for health care & adoptions**
- **Educational clinics in the community & schools**

BECAUSE you **gave** to us:

- **Your time:** In 2024, we welcomed 10 new volunteers! Our 36 dedicated volunteers contributed an estimated 8,000 hours of work, and the impact is evident. We are deeply grateful for their passion and commitment!
- **Your generous donations:** From furniture and household items to entire estates, your donations helped stock our shop and support our mission.
- **Your financial gifts:** Every contribution—whether coins, card, or check—mattered!
- You gave us **cuteness overload** with photos of your fur babies for **March Madness**.
- You contributed items, gift certificates, and experiences for our **Summer Sizzle & Paws for the Cause Celebration**—and even helped us sell out our tickets!

(Rescheduled to 5/16/25 due to Helene.)

BECAUSE you **shopped** with us:

- You **traveled from near and far**, whether it was your first visit or your weekly drop-in. We love seeing you find your “thrills at Lil’s,” as one of our shoppers puts it.
- You **bought treasures** and generously left your “change for change” at the register.
- You **followed us** on Facebook, made purchases from our posts and participated in our **fun games**, like “What the Lil?”
- You inspired us with your **“Show & Tell”** transformations using your purchases.
- You took home a little extra **WNC** Christmas cheer from our Christmas Pop-Up Shop, along with visits from Santa & the Grinch.

BECAUSE you **shared** your hearts:

- You helped **find homes for animals** by reposting our Pets of the Week.
- You brought gifts for the HNGO **Angel Tree** for the pets of families affected by Helene.
- You invited us to participate in **community events** like the Mountains Branch Library volunteer day, LLCA/Bill’s Creek Community yard sale, & Pinnacle Pooch Day.
- You sent us **kind notes**, lifting our spirits.

**your support for us + our partners' hard work =
happier & healthier dogs and cats**



Thank You for being part of Lil's! It's all because of your donations and "purr-chases" that we're able to give our partners what they need. As we build on the successes of 2024, here's what's coming up this year:

- **Optimizing our facility:** Organizing to make it even easier for you to find your next favorite piece!
- **Strengthening partner relationships:** Hosting quarterly meetings to keep everyone connected. Together, we are better!
- **Highlighting partners' work:** Sharing successes, stories, & needs. Facebook Live, "Pet of the Week," & events (i.e. education, adoption fairs, spay/neuter clinics, etc.)
- **Even more "Thrills at Lil's":** Surveying customers & donors to WOW you with new offerings (have you checked out our beverage station & wish list?) Volunteers taking road trips to discover tips from top thrift stores across NC.
- **Creative Fundraising:** Exploring potential of photo shoots & community events.

Woof! Woof! & Meow!

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