

# 20 'tails of rescue' in our community

Submitted by  
Garfield's Rescue Inc.

This is a story told too often in our Northern Neck communities about poverty and eviction, love of pets and a humane rescue. It is a testament to resilience and the beauty of second chances. Many of these stories do not have happy endings for the pets.

When Mr. "D" contacted Garfield's Rescue, he reported to us he and his family had been evicted, had to be out by 3 p.m. and had to find homes for an estimated 15 cats he and his family were feeding.

Sadly when residents are given an eviction notice, their pets are also "served" with that same fateful notice. The "D" family was tasked with an immediate search for affordable housing, which is in short supply in our area, where pets are typically not welcomed—certainly not for the 20+ cats Garfield's Rescue discovered!

In these dire situations, residents are typically experiencing a difficult time in their lives, often living in deplorable conditions, and on a time clock to



**Maggie is among the 20 cats recently entrusted to Garfield's Rescue Inc.**

remove what possessions they can that will fit into a smaller, temporary space—often just a room in someone's house. In these situations, many pets are left behind to fend for themselves, without daily food, fresh water and adequate shelter.

Fortunately, the "D" family contacted Garfield's Rescue for help in providing immediate care and homes for their beloved pets and community strays. The transfer of these

cats was heart-wrenching as tears were shed by all amidst "thank yous" for providing safe, loving "fur-ever" homes for these adoptable cats. This family loved these cats and did the best they could, doing the responsible thing by contacting Garfield's Rescue which is equipped with trappers and fortunately had available foster space at the time for this large rescue. Several others are being lovingly fostered by our partners Kitty Kingdom Cat Cafe in Chesapeake and Cups and Claws LLC, "A Cat Lounge" in Newport News.

Assessing the situation, Garfield's Rescue discovered 20 felines—18 adults plus two nursing newborns a-week old. None of the cats had received veterinarian care or been spayed or neutered. All of the 11 females were pregnant. The smallest of the newborns, without apparent sufficient, adequate nutrients from its momma's milk, passed in the night. We've named the surviving baby "Miracle" who, despite all odds, is now eating independently, exploring her new world and is a playful bundle of joy. These cats, though loved, lived in an outdoor environment that was cruel because without vaccinations or sterilization, the exhausting cycle of reproduction was endless and the fighting and spread of disease from unvaccinated cats was eminent. Cats are capable of feeling fear and pain.

Unsterilized, unvaccinated males fight for mates and territory, spreading disease. Most of the males in this rescue had infected and/or healing bite and puncture wounds; a badly infected eye of one had to be surgically removed, caused from fighting or complications from upper respiratory/herpes disease; or infected polyps requiring surgery. Surprisingly, none were FIV positive nor had feline leukemia.

At an approximate cost of

\$250/cat for standard vetting, the minimum medical costs plus some immediate urgent medical care and surgery alone for this 20-cat rescue was over \$6,000 to make them "purr-fectly" adoptable. This amount doesn't include our average \$8,000 monthly housing, food and routine medical costs for our resident fostered costs. Six of the 20 rescued cats still await adoption in Garfield's Rescue's foster home network and continue to require daily care.

The no-kill philosophy of Garfield's Rescue does not promote euthanasia of adoptable pets. Community safety and good quality of life for pets are guiding principles of this no-kill philosophy that Garfield's Rescue follows, as we engage in best practices to humanely save the most lives possible with well-defined protocols.

All of these cats, and our other resident foster house cats, will find loving homes due to the robust spay/neuter/vaccinate, foster to adopt program of Garfield's Rescue. Spay/neuter is the only permanent 100% effective method of birth control for cats and dogs.

Garfield's Rescue foster cats thrive under our 24/7 care to ensure comfort, wellness and safety as they await adoption. Support of Garfield's Rescue's community fundraisers provides critically needed funds for daily and emergency care of homeless cats and kittens in the Northern Neck.

Garfield's Rescue thanks the Northern Neck communities for supporting our urgent lifesaving mission to "eliminate the suffering of homeless community cats in the Northern Neck" making the region a healthier, safer place to live, work and raise a family.

Visit [www.garfieldsrescue.org](http://www.garfieldsrescue.org) to learn ways to give the homeless, suffering cats we rescue a second chance at life through your donations, volunteering and fostering.

## Access for sportsmen

*continued from page A7*

mittee Chairman Bruce Westerman. "His Protecting Access for Hunters and Anglers Act will ensure states follow the best available science—not the whims of bureaucrats in D.C.—and keep ammunition and tackle costs low, thereby promoting ongoing access for future generations of hunters and anglers."

In November 2022, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) entered into settlement negotiations with activist litigants like the Center for Biological Diversity (CBD) over a lawsuit regarding the use of traditional ammunition and lead on over 3 million acres of federal land. On October 27, 2023, the Biden administration

issued a final rule to prohibit the use of lead ammunition and tackle in eight national wildlife refuges. The concern over the potential ban of lead ammunition and tackle is due to the fact that lead ammunition is easier and cheaper to make and more readily available for consumers. Banning its use would make hunting less accessible by increasing the financial barriers for sportsmen and women.

Supporting organizations include Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation, American Sportfishing Association, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, National Shooting Sports Foundation and Safari Club International.