

Garfield's Gazette

Serving the Northern Neck
counties of Lancaster,
Northumberland, Richmond and
Westmoreland

Fall 2024
9th edition



Making a Difference on Virginia's Northern Neck - one cat at a time!

President's Message

PSST....There Is No Such Thing As Kitten Season!

Do I have your attention? Good, because the tragedy of feline overpopulation requires everyone's urgent attention. Spring brings a phenomenon known as Kitten Season. As winter draws to a close, many unaltered female cats are in heat. Sixty days later, they begin giving birth to litters of kittens. A fertile cat can produce an average of three litters in one year, with an average litter of four to six! Females can become pregnant as young as 4 months old, just babies themselves. Kitten Season is usually defined as the months between March and November when feline reproduction goes into overdrive. The fact is, **KITTEN SEASON NEVER REALLY ENDS!** Public shelter and rescue organizations cannot ever stop doing everything they can to educate people about the absolute necessity of spay/neuter...the only permanent 100% effective method of birth control for cats. Garfield's has rescued over **1927** cats/kittens since our March 2020 inception, placing more than **1808** into loving, responsible homes.

DOOGIE AND DOOLEY are two of the **1927** rescued to date. These siblings were discovered by the husband of a Garfield volunteer, tied up in a bag and thrown away like trash in a dumpster. The rescuer heard kittens crying and noticed the bag was moving. Brought into Garfield's foster care, the crying babies were dehydrated and starving and estimated to be 7 weeks old. Doogie and Dooley



have battled upper respiratory infections since their rescue, due to their early neglect and lack of a Momma's life enriching milk and nurturing. They are quiet kittens, but so very sweet. . . and this type of story **NEVER ENDS.**

Of Garfield's current **120** resident felines, **90** are kittens <6 months old. **31** kittens await vetting and spay/neuter surgeries. At a cost of \$286/cat, the medical costs alone for these **31** rescues is **\$8,866**. This is in addition to our average \$8000 monthly housing, food and routine medical costs.

Your support helps Garfield's continue its lifesaving mission to "eliminate the suffering of homeless community cats on Virginia's Northern Neck, one cat at a time" making Northern Neck communities healthier, safer places to live, work and raise a family. Thank you for giving the most precious gift of all, the gift of life, as your generous donations give these abused, abandoned felines, many subjected to unknown cruelties, a second chance at life.

Karen S Peterson
President
Garfield's Rescue, Inc. (GRI)



Yvonne's Story

Found emaciated and starving beneath the porch of an abandoned property, desperately searching for food to survive, a swollen mouth with both jutting and missing teeth, surrounded by her four, 5-week-old kittens with crusty noses and eyes, Yvonne had endured unspeakable neglect and abuse. Whether her broken jaw was an act of direct cruelty, or she



was hit by a car and left for dead, she was nevertheless responsibly taking care of her babies despite enduring life-threatening abuse and heart-wrenching pain. At an estimated 5 years old, unspayed and unvaccinated, one can only guess how many exhausting

litters of kittens she had had in her short life and how long she had been surviving on the streets. Yvonne and her kittens were all suffering from neglect, respiratory infections, parasites and other medical issues. Yvonne needed life-saving medical care for her injuries, spay surgery to reverse her endless cycle of reproduction, vaccinations to prevent the spread of life-threatening diseases, and all five needed nutritious food, fresh water and safe, warm shelter in the care of Garfield's Rescue, Inc (GRI).

Our initial intake veterinarian exam yielded a determination that Yvonne had a chronic and healed symphyseal separation, which is a fracture between the 2 halves of the mandible and could not be fixed. A diet of wet food was recommended as this condition can cause pain when eating. Yvonne had a great appetite as she was nursing four growing babies! Yvonne and her babies thrived in our care and the entire family became playful. Yvonne captured the attention of a senior lady, who immediately fell in love with Yvonne's calm, gentle nature and adopted her. After several months, the adopter reported to Garfield's that Yvonne was having recurrent upper respiratory infections that healed upon antibiotic treatment, but loss of appetite and weight occurred, and Yvonne was uncharacteristically hiding and hissing when attempts were made to pet and comfort her. At the adopter's request, also due to medical conditions of her own, custody of Yvonne was

returned to Garfield's. Garfield's always accepts returned fosters for any reason.

Follow up veterinarian examinations yielded a diagnosis of severe Gingivitis and ulcerative Stomatitis, a complex, intensely painful, debilitating disease that causes severe inflammation of the entire mouth. Yvonne had begun to drool and was losing weight because it was so painful to eat. She never cried! Both ears were inflamed containing heavy debris and a potential ear mass. She was put-on long-term pain control, antibiotics and ear meds. A referral for a full mouth extraction was urged. A critical care dental surgeon, Dr. Babbitt, DVM DAVDC with Virginia Veterinary Center (VCC) performed Yvonne's consultation, diagnosis and treatment.

Yvonne was diagnosed with having 10 teeth missing; 10 teeth with Type I tooth resorption; 6 teeth with Stage 4 Periodontal disease; 4 teeth with Stage 2 Periodontal disease. Yvonne only had 2 good teeth - one upper molar and one canine! Complete removal of ALL tooth



structures was successfully performed. All of the staff loved Yvonne's gentle nature. Yvonne had a small setback prior to her 2-week follow-up requiring

additional meds and an appetite stimulator. She is now eating voraciously, chasing balls across the floor, and digging her head into caregiver's hands for cuddles. She has an additional follow-up for her mouth, and a determination of the next remedial steps required for repair of her ear disease and rupture.

Yvonne's lifesaving medical bills, to date, exceed \$5000. Lynda deKoning, a compassionate Warsaw resident, learned of Yvonne's story. In memory of Lynda's dear friend, Pamela Miller, who recently passed away, Lynda donated \$5000, directing the donation to support Yvonne's medical expenses. Because

of Lynda's lifesaving donation, Yvonne will be cared for at Garfield's Rescue for as long as it takes to find her perfect home. Lynda, in honor of her friend Pamela, has truly changed Yvonne's life.



Fostering Fulfills a Kitten Fix
by Linda Dunn

I needed a kitten fix! I have adult cats of my own but absolutely adore kittens and decided that fostering would be a good way to fulfill my kitten fix. In April of 2024 I contacted Garfield's Rescue Inc. to inquire about fostering kittens. Well, my kitten fix has worked out perfectly because at this point, I have fostered a total of 38 kittens while having 16 at one time! All the momma cats were sweethearts except for one that was unsocial. Fostering her babies gave me an opportunity to socialize her kittens to become used to loving people and therefore becoming adoptable.

My challenge with fostering is letting go of those tiny, sweet kittens



when they are mature enough to be adopted. I tell myself that they will find wonderful and loving families to live with. Letting go opens space to new homeless kittens to have a start in a loving environment to

flourish and grow. Garfield's has supplied everything that I have needed to care for these furbabies, from food, litter, medications, toys and total emotional support. Thanks to Garfield's Rescue Inc. for giving me the opportunity to fulfill my kitten fix and to give more homeless kittens a new life.

Wine & Whiskers 3rd Annual Community Fundraiser is a Success

Garfield's Rescue, Inc. (GRI) hosted its 3rd annual Wine & Whiskers fundraiser, a benefit to raise awareness and support of Garfield's Rescue's lifesaving mission. More than 100 guests and 17 volunteers attended the highly anticipated gala evening filled with music by Paragon DJs, specially selected wines, and hors d'oeuvres catered by D. Goodman Catering. The event was held September 5, 2024, at the Trinity Episcopal Church Pavilion in Lancaster.



Generous local businesses, service providers, restaurants, regional artisans and theater and musical production companies donated sponsorship monies and more than 85 items for Silent Auction bidding - all packaged into exciting, overflowing themed baskets.



Further evening excitement was generated through attendee monetary pledges for GRI's urgent, unexpected need to provide immediate care of the overwhelming influx of kittens due do a never-ending "kitten season", all requiring spay/neuter/vaccination services and housing. This specific "Fund a Need" segment was fueled by pre-event donor matching funds, who understood the strain that this huge volume of cats/kittens and nursing mommas created on the rescue.

GRI receives no income from government municipalities, relying solely upon donations, fundraising and grants for its income. The monies raised through this annual event

provides GRI with the opportunity to “Make a Difference on YOUR Northern Neck, One Cat at a Time.” We are truly grateful for all of you who donated, attended and continue to support this event and our lifesaving mission. Because of your donations, together we make your NN communities a safer, healthier place in which to live, work, raise a family and start a business.

Using Your IRA to Create Your Legacy of Compassion is Simple

Will saving lives be your legacy? Join compassionate people who are making a lifelong commitment to the urgent crisis of suffering, homeless felines by considering a gift to Garfield’s Rescue, Inc. (GRI) from your individual retirement plan (IRA).

1. Make a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) directly from your Traditional or Inherited IRA to Garfield’s Rescue, Inc. If you are age 70-1/2 or older, you can give up to \$105,000 per year to all charities (\$210,000 for couples) and your gift does not count as a taxable distribution.
2. If you must take a required minimum distribution (RMD), your QCD can count toward this amount.
3. Name Garfield’s Rescue, Inc. a beneficiary of your IRA or another retirement plan. All you need to do is update your beneficiary designation form.

Normally, distributions from a traditional IRA are taxable when received. With a QCD, however, these distributions

become tax-free provided they’re paid directly from the IRA to a qualified charity like Garfield’s Rescue, Inc. To make a QCD for 2024, work with your IRA Trustee to help you

WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE A QCD

-  The QCD must come from a Traditional or Inherited IRA.
-  Beneficiary must be at least 70 ½.
-  The distribution must go directly to a qualified charity.
-  You must receive a confirmation letter from the charity that states no goods or services were received in exchange for the contribution.

explore your options and answer your questions. GRI will provide you with the confirmation letter

you must have that states no goods or services were received in exchange for the contribution.

Provide your IRA Trustee with Garfield’s Rescue’s full legal name and contact information of: Garfield’s Rescue, Inc., P. O. Box 257, Kilmarnock, VA 22482; Federal tax identification number is: 84-5107866. Email address and telephone number are: garfieldsrescue@gmail.com; 804-480-2066.

Need Additional Help? You can also reach out to River Counties Community Foundation (RCCF)



to explore options and ask questions. Whatever the size of your gift, they can help you accomplish your goals. Contact them at 804-436-1600 and reference Garfield’s Rescue, Inc. as your desired

charity for your QCD, or as your beneficiary designation in your Will or Trust.

Love Lost and Found, told by Thor Alexander, Adoptee

Twinkie’s story began when he was trapped to be neutered and then returned to a managed cat colony. Twinkie was not the typical trapped cat that hisses and spits. He was charming and friendly; Twinkie had been a lovingly cared for cat at some point in his life. When GRI first took him in, they found that he had Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV+). FIV attacks the immune system, leaving the cat vulnerable to infections. Though there is no cure for FIV+, recent studies suggest that cats with the disease commonly live average life spans.



Twinkie’s time at the GRI ‘Cat Cottage’ and at Kitty Kingdom Cat Café in Chesapeake was spent with adult cats, of which he wasn’t a fan. During his stay at Kitty Kingdom, he met volunteer Thor. It was love at first sight. Unfortunately, Thor was living in service barracks at the time with no clear end date.



Then he was transferred to Mississippi for training. As soon as he finished his training, Thor moved back to the Virginia Beach area.

Meanwhile, Twinkie moved to Cups and Claws Cat Café in Newport News, hoping that the larger space would suit him better. Thor visited Twinkie on several occasions while he was at Cups and Claws but still could not take him home. Still unhappy with his adult feline companions, Twinkie went back to the GRI 'Cat Cottage'. There volunteers discovered that he loved watching over the little ones in the 'kitten room,' earning him the nickname "Grandpa Twinkie!"



Not long after, Thor had made Petty Officer 2nd Class and the Navy would now provide a housing allowance. Finding himself a pet-friendly apartment, Thor contacted Kitty Kingdom to find out where Twinkie was, directing him back to GRI. The rest, as they say, is history.

Twinkie is extremely loving and affectionate, as his preferred activity is to seek out and lick Thor's hands and sleep in his bed. Twinkie is a curious boy and tries to get outside occasionally, despite attempts to explain to him that he can't due to his FIV+.



He is still very much the "Grandpa" of the house. Thor stated, "He's my baby and I would absolutely encourage adoption of other older, FIV+ or otherwise 'less desirable' cats!" The volunteers at GRI's 'Cat Cottage' wish Twinkie and Thor a wonderful and long life!



Remember GRI on Cyber Monday & Giving Tuesday

Cyber Monday is a marketing term referring to the first Monday after the Thanksgiving holiday in the United States. It's a 24-hour online shopping event that was originally created by businesses to encourage people to do their shopping online and is now often regarded as an extension of the Black Friday sales. This year Cyber Monday is **December 2nd**. Cyber Monday is a great time to purchase items from our Wish Lists at Chewy.com and Amazon.com. Visit our website's DONATE page for direct links or scan the QR Codes with your smart phone.



Amazon Wishlist



Chewy Wishlist



Giving Tuesday is celebrated on the Tuesday following the well-known shopping days of Black Friday and Cyber Monday. This year it will be celebrated on **December 3rd**. Every year people take the time to kick off the holiday season by giving back to their community. Your gift of giving means so much to the homeless cats in our care.

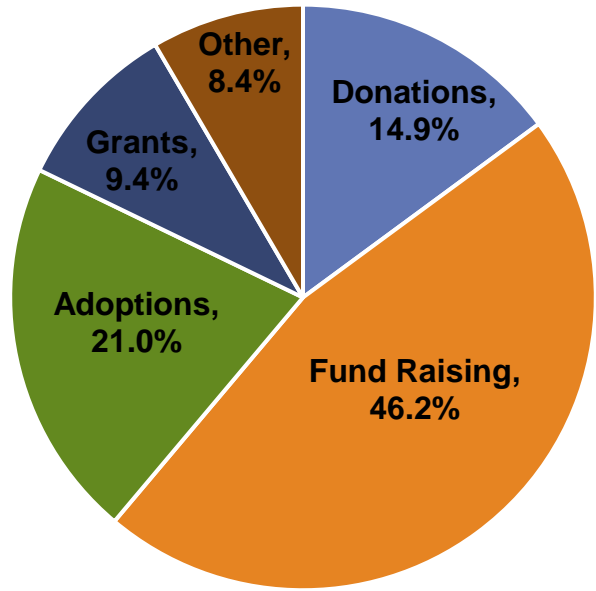


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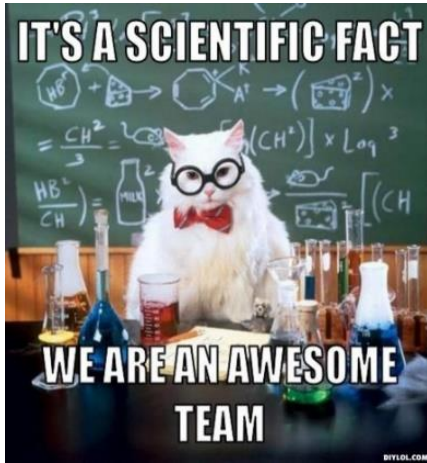
CREDIT/DEBIT

2024 1st 3 quarters Income



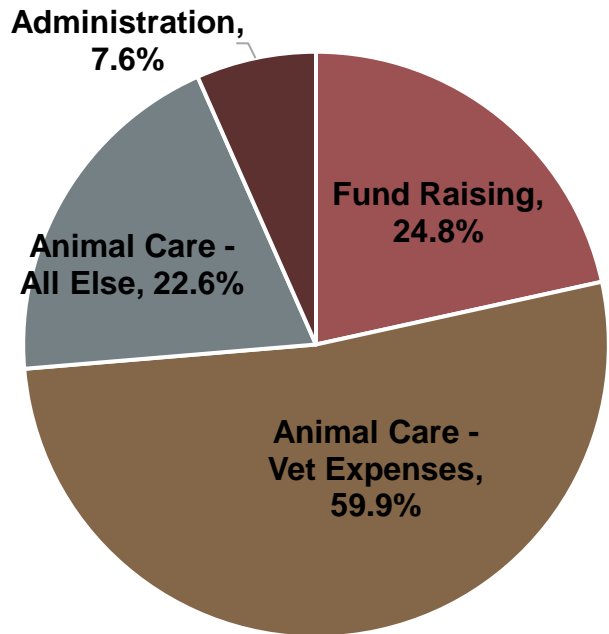
Join Team Garfield's!

Join GRI's team as a member and support humane care of homeless cats on the Northern Neck. Each member, in good standing, gets to vote in officer elections, executive board elections, changes to the by-laws, and other is amendments presented to the membership for approval.



Annual membership rates are \$25 per person, due in January and are valid for one calendar year. As a courtesy to members, dues paid in November and December will be credited to the next year. Use the envelope in this newsletter to mail your membership check payable to Garfield's Rescue, Inc.

2024 1st 3 quarters Expenses



Note: Total Animal Care expenses = 82.5%

Disaster Planning for Cat Owners

Ready Your Cat

- Make sure your cat is wearing ID tags with your most up-to-date contact information.
- Microchip your cat as a more permanent form of identification—in case collars or tags come off.
- Train your cat to feel comfortable going into a crate with regular in-crate sessions with treats.
- Always bring pets indoors at the first sign or warning of a storm or disaster. Pets can become disoriented and wander away from home in a crisis.

Prepare Your Home

- Ideally, you should evacuate with your pet, but if you are unable to do so, a [rescue alert sticker](#) placed near your front door will let first responders know that you have a cat inside your home.
- If sheltering in place, consider these things when choosing your safe room:
 - » Be aware of hazards such as windows, flying debris, etc.
 - » Utility rooms, bathrooms and unfinished basements may be easier to clean if your pet has an accident.
 - » Having a supply of fresh water is particularly important. In areas that may lose electricity, fill up bathtubs and sinks ahead of time to ensure that you have access to water during a power outage or other crises.
 - » In the event of flooding, go to the highest location in your home, or a room that has access to counters or high shelves where your animals can take shelter.

Locate a Temporary Caregiver

(if your cat cannot stay with you after you evacuate)

- Contact your veterinarian for a list of preferred boarding kennels and facilities.
- Ask your local animal shelter if they provide emergency shelter or foster care for pets.
- Identify hotels or motels outside of your immediate area that accept pets.
- Ask friends and relatives outside your immediate area if they would be willing to take in your pet.




Create an Emergency Kit

- Obtain a crate that comfortably fits your cat, write your cat's name and your contact information on a piece of duct tape and stick it on the outside of the crate in case you become separated from your cat.
- Make a portable emergency kit that includes the following:
 - » Medical records
 - » Water (7 days' worth of bottled)
 - » Water bowls
 - » Pet food (3-7 days' worth of canned food with pop tops or dry food)
 - » Pet's medications
 - » Disposable litter trays (aluminum roasting pans work well)
 - » Litter or paper toweling
 - » Litter scooper
 - » [Pet first aid kit](#)
 - » Dish soap and disinfectant
 - » Disposable garbage bags for clean-up
 - » Extra collar
 - » Flashlight
 - » Blanket
 - » Pillow case (as an alternative to a cat carrier)
 - » Recent photos of your cat (hard copy in case your phone dies)
 - » Toys

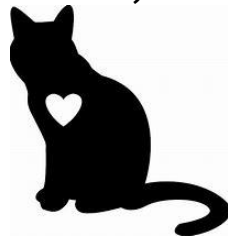
Consider putting the kit inside the crate and storing near an exit.

**CAT CARE
VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED!
-Feeding
-Cleaning
-Socialization**

Garfield's Rescue, Inc.
PO Box 257
Kilmarnock, VA 22482



Garfield's Rescue, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose vision is to "Eliminate suffering of community/homeless cats on the Northern Neck of Virginia" proudly serving Lancaster, Northumberland, Westmoreland and Richmond counties.



804-480-2066 garfieldsrescue@gmail.com www.garfieldsrescue.org



MAKING A DIFFERENCE ON VIRGINIA'S NORTHERN NECK, ONE CAT AT A TIME!