

Garfield's Rescue Inc. strives to make a difference one cat at a time

KILMARNOCK—Garfield's Rescue Inc. (GRI) estimates there are over 1,000 community (homeless) cats that require additional resources and care in Lancaster, Northumberland, Richmond and Westmoreland counties.

GRI was founded in March 2020 with a vision to “eliminate suffering of community cats (homeless cats) on the Northern Neck of Virginia,” reported the organization’s president, Ann Bedford.

GRI volunteers are experienced rescuers with years of service in cat welfare activities, said Bedford. GRI volunteers have and will continue to focus on reducing Northern Neck community cats by rescuing strays, setting up Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) of cat colonies, and rehoming of pets.

GRI receives reports from caring individuals when cats and kittens appear in locations where they cannot receive care, she said. GRI attempts to locate owners in case the cat is lost. If not returned to an owner, the cat is placed in a GRI foster home. During kitten season, GRI rescues and fosters mother cats with kittens and orphan kittens.

One component of GRI is the TNR program, a process of trapping, neutering/spaying and returning the cats to their original locations, said Bedford. Once the cats have been neutered/spayed, they cannot reproduce and the colony ceases to multiply. Some of the community cats are unsocialized and possibly unsocialized (feral), some are socialized and adoptable (possible abandoned pets), and some have litters of kittens.

After the trapped cats are



A caring citizen recently notified Garfield's Rescue Inc. about Nikki living in the community. The before (left) and after pictures demonstrate the effects of a quality rescue effort. In a short period of time, Nikki was transferred to another rescue agency and adopted into a forever home shortly after the transfer.

neutered/spayed, the feral cats are returned to their original locations where caretakers or GRI volunteers care for and monitor the colonies, she said. The adoptable cats are cared for in a GRI foster home. These cats and kittens receive medical care, shelter and food in preparation for adoption or transfer to other feline rescues.

GRI also assumes custody of cats and kittens surrendered to county shelters or directly from owners. GRI supports county shelters and animal control officers by assuming custody of adoptable strays and placing them in GRI foster homes as space allows. Pet owners (or their families) turn to GRI to find another home for much loved cats, said Bedford.

It takes funding to feed, shel-

ter and provide medical care and litter for large numbers of cats. GRI's current source of income is public donations. To donate, visit garfieldsrescue.org, or the Garfield's Rescue Facebook page. Donations can be made on the webpage via PayPal or mailed to Garfield's Rescue Inc., PO Box 257, Kilmarnock, VA 22482.

Comments and questions are welcome and may be emailed to garfieldsrescue@gmail.com.

“We are always looking for new volunteers to support this vital yet humane rescue effort,” said Bedford. “We are in need of trappers, colony caretakers, fosters, cat socializers and event organizers.”

To join this community cat rescue effort, “making a difference on Virginia’s Northern Neck, one cat at a time,” contact GRI.

Cat group with donors