

## Special Needs Cats are Truly Special



By Karen Peterson

**Z**ur, a 7-year old, special needs cat was surrendered to a Northern Neck county animal shelter in December, 2020. He was thin, lethargic, drank lots of water and his once beautiful, long white and orange sherbet colored fur was unkempt. As is shelter protocol Zur was taken to a veterinarian for a general intake exam where blood work revealed that Zur was diabetic and required daily insulin injections. The shelter was unable to provide the care required by a diabetic cat. Reluctantly, the decision was made to euthanize Zur in January, 2021.

A shelter volunteer, who is also a Garfield's Rescue Inc. (GRI) member, reached out with information about Zur. GRI's Director of Fosters immediately

said, "we'll take him!" GRI works closely with local shelters and Animal Control Officers when needs such as Zur's arise. A plan was developed to work with a veterinarian to treat and stabilize Zur's diabetes. GRI saved Zur's life. After three months on insulin, Zur's thick healthy coat returned. He enjoyed interacting with his foster buddies and GRI volunteers. He strutted around comfortably and happily like he owned the place!

GRI has opportunities to community residents to foster cats or kittens in our care and/or to volunteer in one of our foster home facilities. "Terri" and her niece "Danielle" had recently joined the team of volunteers and during their orientation met Zur. He was laid back and sweet and reminded Terri of a cat she had at home who also has diabetes. Learning of Zur's heartbreaking story, Teri believed

she could help Zur flourish. Terri could not stop thinking about Zur and his potential to be healthy and loved. A few days later, her husband surprised her and said "We are going to go get Zur."

Zur's new family consisted of two teenage sons, a golden retriever and four other cats. This family/pet combination was perfect for Zur who was accustomed to enjoying the attention of many caregivers and mingling with other cats in our foster home.

Zur was renamed "Biscuit." Teri said "we have shown him

patience and know that with time he will know that he is family. He is still working on adjusting to our dog. While he isn't quite curled up with her like the other cats yet, he is making progress. He is extremely affectionate and has gotten very used to his new routine and, thanks to diet and meal schedule, his insulin dosage has already been decreased."

Terri said, "Biscuit has already brought us so much joy. I cannot thank GRI enough for saving him and caring for him for so long. I

know they would have kept him as long as he needed a home. I would also like to reach out to the public and let everyone know that special needs pets can make amazingly wonderful companions. These animals see the effort of love and care people give them, and it makes their love even greater. I am blessed to now be a part of this great rescue organization."

Garfield's Rescue, Inc. is a home-based feline rescue foster to adopt organization, established as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) in March of 2020. GRI is 100% volunteer based and relies solely upon



donations and fundraising. Please visit our website at [www.garfieldsrescue.org](http://www.garfieldsrescue.org) or our Facebook page. GRI also accepts donations. Call 804-480-2066, or email [garfieldsrescue@gmail.com](mailto:garfieldsrescue@gmail.com). *Karen Peterson is Fundraising Chair for Garfield's Rescue Inc. Photos courtesy GRI.*