

# GRI continues homeless cat community outreach

Garfield's Rescue Inc. (GRI) president Ann Bedford recently shared a "tail" of success regarding 35 cats in Lancaster County.

"You may have heard this story previously, but it is well worth reading and learning the end of the story. This is a true accounting of poverty and eviction, love of pets and a humane rescue," said Bedford.

"When Mr. and Mrs. 'R,' her with the complication of a disability, were given a two-week eviction notice, their pets were also 'served,'" continued Bedford. "The 'R' family was tasked with an immediate search for affordable housing and many times pets are typically not welcomed... certainly not 35 cats. In these situations, many pets are left behind to fend for themselves.

"Fortunately, the 'R' family contacted GRI for help in providing immediate care and homes for their beloved pets. GRI volunteers visited the home, assessed the situation and discovered two nursing momma cats inside the home, each with four kittens, in addition to 25 teenagers and adults outside. None had received veterinarian care or been spayed or neutered!

"GRI developed an action plan, but the timing wasn't good as it was the height of the summer kitten season, and our foster space was overflowing with kittens. We reached out to the community with pleas for fosters and two wonderful volunteers—the lifeline of our organization!—stepped up and took the mommas and babies, now named Livi and Lola.

"The outdoor cats, most of which were friendly, were gathered up and brought to the GRI foster house to wait for complete vetting and spay/



**Ten of these 35 cats are still in need of a "forever" home.**

neuter surgeries to make them 'purr-fectly adoptable.' At an approximate cost of \$250 per cat, the minimum medical costs alone for this 35-cat rescue is \$8,750. The remaining cats are being fostered in our network of private homes and at Kitty Kingdom Cat Cafe in Chesapeake and Cups & Claws Cat Cafe in Newport News," she said.

Vetting costs for the 35 cats was well above \$8,750 in addition to GRI's average \$8,000 monthly housing, food and routine medical costs for resident homeless foster cats,

said Bedford. GRI's no-kill philosophy 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 GRI follows, as the organization engages in best practices to humanely save the most lives possible with well-defined protocols.

Now, for the end of the story, she said. "Thanks to our outreach programs and foster relationships with two outstanding cat cafes, Kitty Kingdom Cat Café in Chesapeake, and Cups and Claws Cat Café in New-

port News, 25 cats have been adopted! The rest continue to live wonderful lives in foster care until their 'forever' day arrives.

"Attendees at our Wine & Whiskers fundraiser in September supported this cause with a 'Fund a Need' donation after hearing this story," said Bedford. "The funds raised have contributed to provide lifesaving veterinarian care, spay/neuter surgeries to prevent their endless cycle of reproduction, vaccinations to prevent their spread of disease, daily foster care and transport costs for the 35 evicted cats. Ten of the 35 cats still await adoption in GRI's foster home network, and continue to require daily care.

She urges the community to visit [www.garfieldsrescue.org](http://www.garfieldsrescue.org) to learn ways to give them a second chance at life and help them survive with generous donations.

"Thank you for supporting our lifesaving mission to 'eliminate the suffering of homeless community cats in the Northern Neck of Virginia' making the Northern Neck a healthier, safer place to live, work and raise a family, said Bedford.

## *GRI volunteers and five kittens visit Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury*

Volunteers with Garfield's Rescue Inc. (GRI) and five playful kittens, Queenie, Lilly, Hailey, Elliott and Elsie, recently visited with more than 20 welcoming residents and staff at Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury (RWC).

The kittens frolicked and played, entertaining the delighted residents who cuddled and

