

# Garfield's Gazette

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

Fall 2025  
11th edition



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

## President's Message

Love doesn't erase the pain, but it helps rewrite the story. With your support, Garfield's Rescue can rewrite a happy ending for the stories of the 143 abandoned community (homeless) cats and kittens currently in our care. Once loved, thousands of these felines have been abandoned without reason to fend for themselves in a desperate search of food, clean water and shelter.

As part of a dedicated animal welfare network that works to protect and improve the well-being of animals, Garfield's Rescue (GRI) responds to community calls when abandoned cats/kittens are found in need. In 2025 alone, GRI rescued 348 of these cats, including kittens under 6 months old - many found starving and with severe medical needs. Community cats exist because of generations of human action and inaction, therefore addressing the needs of these abandoned cats and implementing programs which help prevent their endless cycle of reproduction are the responsibility of the communities in which they live.

Garfield's Rescue serves you, the community residents, using private donations as our sole source of income and volunteers to give a second chance at life to over 2300 homeless cats and kittens, and provide more than 1400 spay/neuter surgeries. These efforts have prevented the births of thousands of unwanted kittens, preventing their imminent euthanasia in overcrowded shelters. There are so many more abandoned cats to be saved, but our capacity is limited. We seek to expand our facility to better serve these vulnerable animals and support our volunteers. Through a generous gift, we have resources to build a modest, safe facility where

our foster cats can thrive as they await adoption in a nurturing environment. A donation of one to two acres of appropriately zoned land near Kilmarnock would allow us to increase our lifesaving efforts. As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, donors may benefit from tax advantages.

So, we invite you to help Garfield's Rescue secure a "home for the holidays" and rewrite a happy ending for the cats and kittens now healing and thriving in our lifesaving care. Your support enables us to continue serving the community and saving lives.

In Gratitude,  
Karen S. Peterson, President

## Beautiful Black Cats

Only in North America are black cats considered 'bad luck'. These myths reflect a mix of cultural beliefs and superstitions that have persisted over time.



In ancient Egypt, black cats were held in the highest esteem because they resembled Bastet, the cat-headed Egyptian goddess of home, fertility, and protection from disease. Black cats are considered good luck in other parts of the globe, as well.

- In Asia and the U.K., you're going to be lucky in life if you own a black cat.
- In Japan, you'll have luck in finding love if you spot a black cat.
- In parts of England, a bride will have luck in her marriage if she receives a black cat as a gift.

- In Europe, sailors will have a safe journey if they bring along a black cat on the ship.
- In Scotland, you'll have coming prosperity if a black cat appears at your doorway or on your porch.
- In France, something magical is about to happen if you see a black cat.

In other cultures, around the world, it's a sign of good luck if you dream about a black cat, see one walking towards you, or if you happen to find a stray white hair on its gleaming ebony fur.

All cats are worthy of love, whether orange and fluffy, sleek and hairless, or gray and floofy. But there's something undeniably special about black cats. These beautiful felines are just like any other cat breed, with their own unique characteristics and personalities.

These beautiful kitties are all available through GRI. Some can be met at Cups and Claws Cat Lounge in Newport News; some at Kitty Kingdom Cat Cafe, in Chesapeake and some at our 'cat cottage' in Weems.

### Shelters for Outside Cats

Providing proper shelters for outside cats during winter is crucial for their survival, and there are various DIY and premade options available to ensure they stay warm and safe.



Winter is harsh on everyone, but more so for homeless community cats. As temperatures drop, these animals face increased risks of hunger, disease, and even death from exposure to the elements. You can save these vulnerable creatures by providing them with an outdoor shelter!



You can build an outdoor cat shelter using directions on the GRI website [www.garfieldrescue.com](http://www.garfieldrescue.com). Use materials like polystyrene coolers, plastic bins, or wooden crates (make it waterproof) and insulate them

with straw. Please do not use blankets as they draw moisture and the cats cannot maintain their body heat. Keep the shelter off the ground to prevent moisture from seeping through and place a flap over the opening to keep the cats body heat inside the shelter.



If you do not have the time or tools to make a shelter, Amazon.com, Tractor Supply Company, and Chewy.com all have great shelter options at different price points.

Some are heated with animal safe heat sources, but you would need access to an electrical outlet. Once you have the shelter, place it in a place protected from rain or snow. Providing a homeless cat with a shelter for warmth may save that cat's life and certainly warm your heart.

### MICROCHIPS TO THE RESCUE!

According to the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), microchipped cats are reunited with their owners at a rate of



38.5%, compared with only 1.8% for cats who are not microchipped. A microchip is a rice-sized radio-frequency identification device (RFID), that is quickly and painlessly inserted under your pet's skin. It is not a GPS, but a permanent form of ID that can be registered in a recovery database, which holds info about the pet and its owner.

GRI ensures that all the cats and kittens in their care are microchipped. We use 24 Petwatch. Information is furnished to all adopters on how to register the pet with their contact information. Registration is free; however, many additional services are available through the company. One of the reasons that we use 24 Petwatch is the fact that if an owner does not register the chip when the cat is adopted, the chip will reflect that GRI was the organization that originally inserted the microchip and we keep a record of all of those chips.

Many times, indoor cats manage to slip out. It's not uncommon. Outdoor cats go in and out all the time, but when indoor cats get out, they can find themselves disoriented and lost and unable to return home. GRI has several first-hand experiences with this scenario. A few months ago, we received a call from a

**Microchipped? Great!**  
Microchipping your pet helps ensure they return home if lost.

**Is it up to date?**  
When's the last time you checked that chip info?

**How to update**  
Contact the company registered with your pet's chip on the phone or online.

shelter. A stray cat had been brought into their facility. Upon a routine chip scan, it was discovered that GRI was originally responsible for this cat. The shelter contacted us and we were able to provide them with the adopters' name and contact information. The cat and owners were reunited after the cat had escaped from their car 2 months prior.

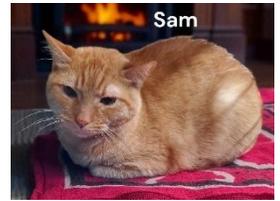
About a month ago, we received a call from a resident who had found a cat on her property. She took it to her local veterinarian and had it scanned for a chip. Although the chip had not been registered, it revealed that GRI was the original owner of the chip. We were able to provide information on the owners. Again, the cat was reunited with its family after getting lost during a move to a new home.

Microchips do save pets. Be sure to keep your information current. A registered microchip can be the difference between lost and found.

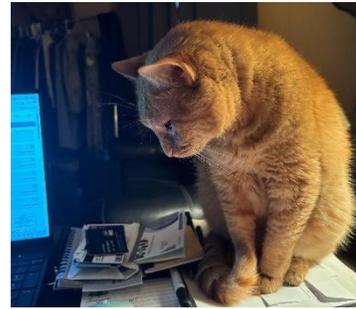


### Sam I Am's Story

You will love this happy ending story! Sam was living a wonderful life with his loving human. Sam's life took a dramatic turn when the love of his life relocated to a facility and couldn't take Sam along.



The devoted owner ensured Sam's well-being by surrendering him to Garfield's Rescue Inc. Garfield's shared Sam's story, and a



compassionate new family, who has a heart for giving mature cats a second chance, adopted Sam. Sam is now thriving with his new family and loving his role as

office assistant! Garfield's wishes Sam and his new family a very happy and long life together!

### Girl Scouts visit GRI

Girl Scout Troop 1278 recently assisted a Blessing of the Animals at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, in Oak Grove, with the sorting and delivery of donated pet food to local rescue organizations.



During their delivery to Garfield's Foster Facility, the Girl Scouts had the opportunity to interact with the cats and kittens in our care. Research highlights the significant benefits of this type of volunteerism, including personal and emotional growth, skill development, and future opportunities. Garfield's Rescue, Inc. extends its gratitude to Girl Scout Troop 1278



for their support and encourages their continued efforts in aiding homeless animals on the Northern Neck.

## Vinnie's Story

Back in the Spring, Garfield's received a call about a litter of kittens living under an abandoned trailer in the Montross area. A volunteer went to the location, crawled under the trailer and was able to secure Vinnie and his 3 siblings. Vinnie was approximately 8 weeks old.

Vinnie was suffering from a case of Feline Herpes, a highly contagious virus that affects domestic and wild cats, leading to symptoms such as sneezing, nasal discharge and conjunctivitis. Vinnie's case was so severe that it caused his left eye to rupture, resulting in surgery to remove the eye, called Enucleation.



Vinnie quickly recovered from this surgery, and began enjoying life, running and playing as kittens do. It was at this time that it was noted that Vinnie had a limp and a visit to the vet was scheduled. X-rays indicated a broken and healed femur. A specialist was consulted and it was determined that Vinnie had suffered an unknown trauma that had shattered his leg. An amputation of his leg was scheduled.

Vinnie's medical bills amounted to over \$3,000 and a fundraiser was organized to help raise the money to pay the bills. GRI volunteer, Hannah, is a talented artist who donated her skills to paint a portrait of the winning raffle ticket's pet. Raffle tickets were sold for \$10 each or 3 for \$25.



The support from the community was greatly appreciated!

The winner of the raffle was a huge GRI supporter, who owns 2 corgis and 2 cats adopted through GRI. Congratulations Marilou!

And Vinnie? He was adopted by the Assistant Manager of Cups & Claws Cat Lounge in Newport News after fostering him throughout his recovery from surgery. His feline companions include 2 other fosters adopted through GRI. His mom reports that he is an active, loving companion and is living his life to the fullest.



## Garfield's Wine & Whiskers Fundraising Gala Success

Garfield's Rescue, Inc. (GRI) hosted its 4th annual lifesaving "Wine & Whiskers" community benefit to raise awareness for their mission to save the lives of 1000's of abused, neglected homeless (community) cats and kittens in Virginia's Northern Neck communities. It was a phenomenal success!



Held Thursday, September 4th, at the Trinity Episcopal Church Pavilion in Lancaster, the ticket sales were very close to a sellout. The attendees, in support of Garfield's lifesaving mission, enjoyed music by Paragon DJs, passed hors d'oeuvres by D. Goodman Catering, specially curated wines, and perusing and bidding on amazing auction items.

Twenty-seven local sponsors supported the community benefit to promote Garfield's mission to eliminate the suffering of homeless (community) cats and kittens. Their support helps make Virginia's Northern Neck communities healthier, safer places to live, work and raise a family. A huge thank you goes to the ninety-three local retail businesses, theater groups and artisans that donated amazing items for the benefit's Silent Auction segment. Items ranged from a two-hour sunset sail on the Rappahannock River to an in-home chef prepared dinner for six. GRI President, Karen Peterson, led a fast paced "Fund A Need" segment that raised urgently needed funds for

69 of their 140 currently fostered kittens, now age and weight appropriate, for lifesaving spay/neuter surgeries and vaccinations to prevent life threatening disease. Attendees enjoyed the opportunity to raise a paddle and pledge to make a lifesaving gift to support the high costs of this full vetting. At a cost of \$286/kitten, for the 69 kittens alone it takes \$19,734 to make them “purr-fectly” adoptable.



Two lucky supporters were excited to win retailer donated door prizes, and one lucky supporter won \$330 in the Fifty-Fifty Raffle.

Garfield’s Rescue is so grateful to the sponsors that support its lifesaving “Wine & Whiskers” community benefit; to the retailers, theater groups and artisans that donate their many amazing products; and, to the 15 dedicated volunteers that support this annual, lifesaving community benefit with their hard work. You have all given the most precious gift of all, the gift of life to one of your region’s most vulnerable populations. Your generous lifesaving gifts provide these abused, neglected felines.... once loved but abandoned without reason.... a second chance at life.

### Oliver’s Story

In early April, a stray cat showed up on the porch of a Heathsville couple, wanting to come inside the home. He had numerous open wounds, obviously beat up by other male cats. They took him to their vet, where the wounds were treated and vaccinations given. It became immediately apparent that this 4-year-old, orange and white tabby, was a lover, not a fighter. The couple were unable to keep a cat, therefore, GRI was contacted and he came into our care.



When GRI first took Oliver 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+; however, cats who test positive for FIV usually live long, healthy lives and do not infect other household pets.

It was immediately evident to the GRI volunteers that Oliver had been a pet at one time in his life. Why he ended up homeless and having to fend for himself, we will never know. This gentle soul settled right into life at our ‘cat cottage’, getting along with all of the other cats, consistently using the litter box and digging his head into everyone’s hand wanting to receive rubs and then rewarding you with his loud purr. We did find out pretty quick; however, that Oliver HATES dogs.

Oliver is currently residing at the Cups & Claws Cat Lounge in Newport News, where he spends his days giving and receiving attention to its staff and patrons. He loves belly rubs; playing with cat wands and is a great ‘cat daddy’ to the little kittens. He has had a number of adoption inquiries; however, his hate for dogs has restricted any from being approved. If you can open your heart and home, to this big teddy bear, and have no dogs, feel free to submit an adoption application. You won’t be sorry!



### Kitties Visit RWC

All paws went up at Garfield’s “Cat Cottage” when foster cats and kittens were asked who wanted to go on another field trip to their favorite place, Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury (RWC). Seven entertaining kittens of various ages and colors were the chosen ones.



Rappahannock  
Westminster-Canterbury

Three-month-old siblings

Roscoe, Ringo and Ramona loved to cuddle, and eager residents couldn’t wait to enjoy the love only a kitten can give. The kittens curled up

on laps, draped themselves upon shoulders and were not shy about giving nose kisses.

Six-week-old orange kittens, Jack and Jim were the youngest kittens to entertain the RWC residents. Two-month-old Hattie and three-month-old Pacer were quite the entertaining escape artists of the entourage, jumping out of the kitten pen causing all to laugh at their boundless energy and curious natures.

Many of the RWC residents from each, the independent living and assisted living, RWC population are unable to have cats of their own and look forward GRI's visits. Volunteers love hearing stories about their many former, beloved pets.

RWC hosts, life enrichment specialist Bonny Magerko, activity manager Rebecca Mahoney and life enrichment director Amy Lewis provided



a welcoming, spacious area for residents to happily interact with Garfield's Rescue volunteers and the energetic kittens.

Staff made a special requested trip to a lovely bedridden resident who wanted to hold and cuddle a kitten. Unsighted, she exclaimed "is it real," not believing she was holding a real kitten. She was so happy to learn Roscoe's gray and white coloring was the same as her own beloved cat from the past. Roscoe didn't want to leave her warm embrace and made himself at home in her arms.



## Garfield's Rescue Joins the Volunteer River Counties Portal

We're excited to announce that Garfield's Rescue, Inc. is now featured on the Volunteer River Counties portal—a regional online volunteer hub connecting volunteers with nonprofits across Lancaster, Middlesex, and Northumberland counties. Garfield's was one of the initial coalitions of 40 local organizations across the River Counties region, engaged in the committee launch planning, which was launched in September.



This free, easy-to-use platform was developed through a partnership between Serve Virginia, the Virginia Service Foundation, and the River Counties Community Foundation, with generous funding from the Robert B. Lantz Foundation. It's designed to strengthen civic engagement and streamline volunteer recruitment of all ages across the region.

- ◆ Over 66 registered local nonprofits are currently part of the coalition (and growing!)
- ◆ Opportunities span animal welfare, education, food security, environmental stewardship, and more
- ◆ Volunteers can filter by location, interest, and availability
- ◆ Organizations gain access to shared resources and best practices for volunteer management

For Garfield's Rescue, this means:

- Faster matching with fosters, transporters, volunteers for Weems foster "Cat Cottage" to socialize cats/kittens; perform general condo and cat room cleaning; administer meds, and TNVR volunteers

- Broader outreach across all three counties
- Stronger community ties through shared service initiatives

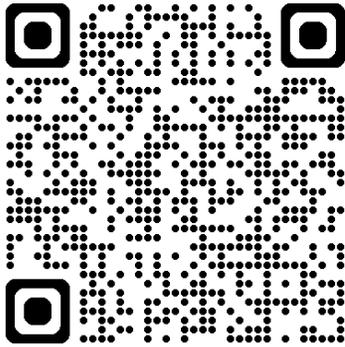
Whether you're a seasoned foster or just starting your journey in animal advocacy, this portal makes it easier than ever to get involved.

### 'Tis The Season for Giving

On average, about 30% of annual giving occurs in the last two months of the year. During this season of giving, we ask you consider giving gifts to our foster kitties. Scan the QR Codes below with your smart phone to select and purchase much needed items on our Amazon or Chewy Wishlist or donate directly to GRI's fund for daily lifesaving medical care and nutritious food for our resident community foster cats and kittens. Checks can be mailed to Garfield's Rescue Inc., PO Box 257, Kilmarnock, Virginia 22482. You can also visit our Donate page on our website.



**When in the Hampton Roads area, be sure to visit our partners, Kitty Kingdom Cat Café, 565 Cedar Road Suite 12, Chesapeake and Clips & Claws Cat Lounge, 10605 Jefferson Ave, Newport News! Tell them that Garfield's Rescue sent you!**



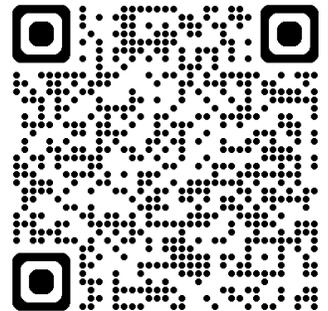
Debit/Credit Card

chewy.com

CHEWY WISH LIST



**venmo**





**Love kittens?**  
**Wish they'd stay small forever?**  
Well the next best thing would be to foster kittens until they're at an adoptable age, then get a new set of kittens.



Garfield's Rescue, Inc.  
PO Box 257  
Blumark, 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" which includes Lancaster, Northumberland, Westmoreland and Richmond counties.



804-480-2066 \* [garfieldsrescue@gmail.com](mailto:garfieldsrescue@gmail.com) \* [www.garfieldsrescue.org](http://www.garfieldsrescue.org)



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