

Four foster kittens helped me heal —and why fostering matters now

by Carol Clark

When my own beloved kitty passed away, the silence in my home felt overwhelming. Anyone who has loved and lost a pet knows that particular kind of quiet—the way it settles into the corners of the house and into your heart. For a while, I wasn't sure when I would be ready to open my home again.

Then four tiny foster kittens arrived.

They tumbled into my life with bright eyes, unsteady paws, and an endless need for care. Bottle feedings, litter training, and the joyful chaos of four little personalities filled my days. What I thought would be a small act of helping Garfield's Rescue turned out to be a source of healing I didn't know I needed. Those kittens brought energy back into my home and purpose back into my routine. In caring for them, I found comfort, and in watching them grow, I found hope.

Over the years, I've learned that fostering is the heart of Garfield's Rescue. It is where frightened cats learn to trust again, where sick cats recover, and where kittens—sometimes four at a time—grow strong enough to be adopted. Every foster home expands our capacity to save more lives. Every volunteer who opens their home becomes part of a network that stretches across the Northern Neck.

But as our foster network has grown, so have the demands on our small, temporary location. We have outgrown the space we currently lease. The limitations are becoming more visible each month. Intake areas are too tight, medical rooms are shared and storage is improvised. Our lease is nearing its end and it is clear that Garfield's Rescue needs a permanent, purpose-built home—one designed for the safety, health and comfort of the cats in our care, and for the volunteers who make our



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work possible.

This year, we will begin sharing more about that vision: Garfield's Cat Care Building Project, a future building designed to support our mission for years to come. Over the coming months, we will help our

community understand why this next step is necessary, what it will look like and how each of us can play a part in making it real.

But for now, I want to return to where this journey begins—with fostering. If you have ever considered

opening your home to a cat in need, this is the moment. Whether you take in a shy adult, a nursing mom and her kittens, or a lively group of motherless kittens, you are giving them the one thing no building can replace: a safe place to grow and trust again.

Those four kittens changed my life. Fostering continues to change the lives of hundreds of cats each year. And as we prepare for the next chapter of Garfield's Rescue, it remains the foundation of everything we do.

For info on volunteering, fostering, or future plans, see www.garfieldsrescue.org or find us on Facebook. Together, we can build a safer, stronger future for the cats of the Northern Neck.

Carol Clark of Kilmar-nock serves as corresponding secretary on the Garfield's Rescue Inc. board of directors.

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