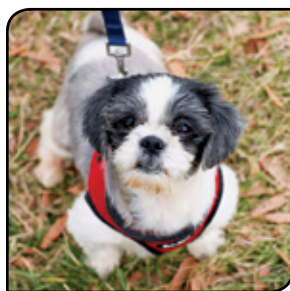




## Preparing for Unexpected Vet Bills



BY **Katie McHenry**  
& **Kathleen MacKinnon**

**I**t's every pet parent's worst nightmare: facing an unexpected vet bill that is thousands of dollars. This often comes out of nowhere, such as an unexpected injury or, as was the case with SPCA NOVA cat

Jax, a urinary blockage. If you can't afford a sudden expense of thousands of dollars, you may be faced with going into debt, searching for a way to surrender your pet to someone else, or, sadly, considering euthanasia. What options do you have?

### Jax's Story

Jax was transferred to SPCA NOVA's care in April

after his guardian rushed him to the vet with what turned out to be a urinary blockage. This condition can be fatal if not treated immediately: toxins can back up into the kidneys and cause kidney failure within 24 hours. Blockages happen more easily in male cats than females. Thankfully, this condition is treatable, albeit expensive.

Jax's guardian was unable to afford treatment or provide him with lifelong monitoring and care. Initial treatment can run up to \$4,000: IV fluids; urinary catheter; medications for pain, to relax the bladder, and to treat a possible urinary infection; urinalyses to monitor the urine; blood work to monitor the

kidneys and other vital organs; and at least 72 hours of hospitalization.

Here was Jax – an otherwise healthy and loving 3-year-old cat. The vets overseeing Jax's care offered to try to find a rescue organization to take him into their care. This is when SPCA NOVA stepped in and took responsibility for Jax. As a nonprofit organization, SPCA NOVA was able to launch a fundraising campaign on Facebook. Thanks to our supporters, we raised just over \$2,000 to help pay Jax's vet bills. Sadly, SPCA NOVA gets requests like this all too often. We don't have the resources to take in every cat or dog facing these situations. Jax was one of the lucky ones.

Thankfully, Jax is now doing great. After being released from the vet hospital, he received a few weeks of careful monitoring and prescription food to prevent future blockages. After a couple of months in our care, a wonderful couple has adopted Jax!

So what are the best ways to be prepared for situations like Jax's?

### Pet Insurance

Pet insurance has become more popular than ever, and according to Consumer Affairs, the ASPCA's plan is ranked the most popular. (ASPCA stands for the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, but is not affiliated with SPCA NOVA.)

Like many pet insurance entities, ASPCA offers a variety of options, including basic coverage, comprehensive coverage and wellness plans, and accident-only coverage

ABOVE: Jax relaxes in his foster home after being treated for an unexpected urinary blockage.

TOP: Eve, a Shih Tzu, suffers minor health conditions that are common in her breed. Some insurance companies restrict coverage for purebred animals.

### In Every Issue:

- 2 President's Letter
- 7 Special Thanks
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- 11 Donate Now!



**SPCA**

of Northern Virginia

**SPCA of Northern Virginia**

P.O. Box 100220

Arlington, VA 22210-3220

(703) 799-9390

information@spcanova.org

www.spcanova.org

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The SPCA of Northern Virginia is a volunteer-based, non-profit rescue organization. We rely on donations, adoption fees, and fundraising activities for revenue. Our voluntary Board of Directors, volunteers, and part-time employees are responsible for all SPCA activities. We do not have a shelter and depend on a private kennel and foster parents to care for domestic animals until adoption.

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## President's Letter

# We've Come a Long Way!

BY *Dana Meeker*

I am so inspired when I look at how far the world of animal welfare has come. Back in 1992 when the SPCA of Northern Virginia was founded, shelter euthanasia was taken for granted, there were few options available to prevent it, and only a few organizations existed to help so many animals in need of rescue. Since then, SPCA NOVA has been a voice for animals in need.

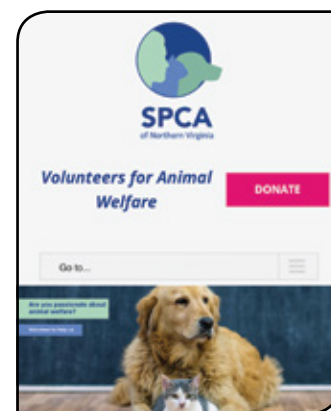
We began with a small cadre of animal-loving supporters who fostered, nursed to health, championed, and found new homes for animals rescued from horrible neglect and abuse. I recently tallied up the impact. More than 8,000 animals came in from the cold, felt grass under their feet for the first time, or felt a loving touch for the first time in someone's arms, thanks to our volunteers and supporters. Wow!

That small cadre of animal lovers has grown to a huge community, representing hundreds of organizations, with many dozen just in the DMV (DC, Maryland, Virginia). Indeed, people who move to this area from other areas of the country are

amazed at the number of animal welfare organizations here. This growth has opened discussions resulting in innovative and creative ways to involve more individuals to save more animals. Animal transport, dogs' days out, community cat Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR), and neonatal kitten nurseries are just some of the initiatives that are saving lives in the DMV and around the country. We're not done, though. We need to keep the discussions going, sharing opinions frankly and respectfully, to save even more animals.

Without humane education, however, animals will continue to be abused or neglected. Pets will continue to be relinquished because their guardians don't know where to turn for help or information. SPCA NOVA has always given freely the benefit of our experience. In this issue we tell you about Jax and the importance of planning for medical emergencies. We give you some tips to help you determine if a cat you've seen outside needs help and where to turn to ensure that cat gets the care they need.

We also hope you'll visit our redesigned and



Have you visited our updated website? It's now mobile friendly.

updated website. We've made it more mobile-friendly and tried to make it easier for you to find what you need. We welcome your feedback.

As we wind down this year, which has flown by, I want to thank everyone who helps us help the animals, giving of their money, their time, or just their kind words of support. Our work is hard, and sometimes sad – a hug goes a long way.

Please consider making a year-end gift to SPCA NOVA to help the animals. Volunteer with us in some capacity – foster, help at adoption fairs, or perform administrative functions. Or perhaps a furry friend is in your future, because adopting is another way to help. No matter how you choose to help, we appreciate you!

# Finding a Perfect Match, Twice

BY *Lyda Gould*

In 2016, Janet Petri and David Jacoby adopted Jenna, now Jenny, after seeing her first on our website and then at an adoption event at Weber's Pet Supermarket. At the time, one of their dogs had just passed away and they were looking specifically for a beagle/basset hound companion for their 15-year-old dog, Bob, who is the same breed. Though they were actually there to visit with another dog, when they saw Jenny in person, David was adamant that she would be the dog they took home, even though she wasn't the same breed as Bob.

## Jenny & Bob

Jenny and Bob immediately bonded, sharing a bed from the start. Jenny had come to SPCA NOVA from a Maryland animal control facility

with entropion in both eyes (inverted eyelashes), and it took a few surgeries to fully correct. However, that didn't stop Jenny from mothering Bob right away, who had his own eye issues. After seeing Janet clean Bob's eyes every day with a cotton ball, Jenny took to licking his eyes every morning. Also, when it was time to get a treat, she would show Bob her treat, encouraging him to get up and go get his treat, too. In fact, she wouldn't eat her treat until he had his.

When Bob passed away, Janet and David felt that Jenny was not happy without someone to mother. This led them back to SPCA NOVA to find a companion for Jenny. They spoke with SPCA NOVA President Dana Meeker and Lisa

Reid, who manages Ragged Mountain Dogs where our dogs are kenneled. Being mindful of Jenny's maternal instincts, Dana and Lisa



Jenny needs a friend to mother, so Lucy was adopted after Bob's passing.

selected Lucy (then named Luna). Janet says, "They couldn't have selected a better dog."

## Lucy & Jenny

We know Lucy had a seizure soon after her birth. She had an irregular gait and appeared to be visually impaired, if not blind, which SPCA NOVA attributed to the seizure, or whatever had caused the seizure. But none of that stopped Janet and David from welcoming her into their home. In fact, they decided to take her to an ophthalmologist who remarkably reported that her eyes were in perfect condition and suggested that her problem might actually be neurological.

Surprisingly, once Janet returned to the ophthalmologist's to pick her up, Lucy's disposition suddenly did a 180. Where before she had been timid and uncertain, she quickly brightened in Janet's presence and began to trust her new family. Janet believes this is

because Lucy realized she wasn't being left behind.

Today, Lucy enjoys hiding her treats from Jenny and copying everything that Jenny

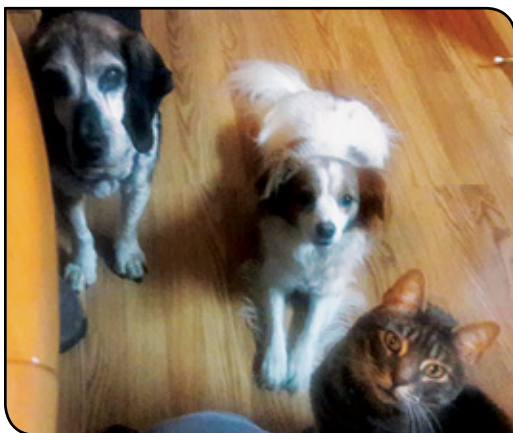
does. If Jenny is told a command, Lucy follows the command. If Jenny jumps a 12-inch post, Lucy attempts to jump the post – even though Lucy is much shorter and not as athletically inclined as Jenny has proven to be.

Lucy still has her moments. Janet says, "Lucy is afraid of the vacuum cleaner. When I run the cleaner, Jenny lies with Lucy for comfort, and we couldn't have asked for a better hook up."

## Perfect Matches

Over many years, Janet and David have had many wonderful pets. Janet's seasoned advice to those considering pet adoption is to "look for a dog that meets [your] needs and be cognizant of the dog's needs when [you] adopt."

Finding the perfect match is essential to a successful adoption. Fortunately, the efforts made by everyone led to just that for Jenny and Lucy. Janet says, "We couldn't be happier."



Bob and Jenny, who immediately bonded after Jenny was adopted, share their home with a cat as well.

# Have You Seen this Cat?

BY **Kathleen MacKinnon\***

**L**ook again. Almost every community has one: the neighborhood tomcat. Some people ignore him, hoping he will disappear. Others assume he has a home. Some feed him when he shows up and want to do more to help, but don't know what else to do.

## Jasper

Jasper was once that cat – a stray living on the streets to fend for himself. Some people in his neighborhood took notice of him. He was very friendly, rubbing up against their legs and asking to be petted, which means he definitely wasn't feral (see “Stray vs. Feral” sidebar for an explanation of

these terms). A couple of people were feeding him sporadically, but he never showed up consistently, so they assumed he had a home. And then one day he showed up with a huge wound on his neck.

At that point, one kind person knew more had to be done. She talked to a neighbor who works with SPCA NOVA, and the neighbor reached out to us for help. With an open wound on his neck, we decided there wasn't enough time to determine if he had a home somewhere. He needed medical attention right away.

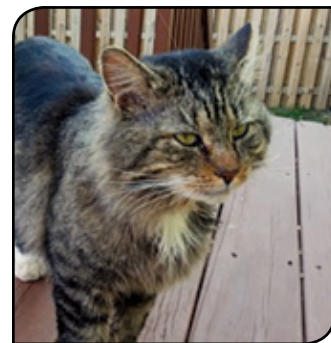
Once this neighborhood tom – whom we named Jasper – came into our care, it became clear he must have been lost or abandoned because of his poor condition. He had an infected wound on his neck and was malnourished. He was about 3 pounds

underweight. Jasper was also estimated to be 3 years old, not neutered yet, and tested positive for the feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV). FIV is transmitted through bite wounds and is more prevalent in unneutered male cats because they fight other males for territory and female cats. Because there is a 60-day latent period before the FIV virus shows up in testing, this means Jasper must have contracted it from previous bite wounds from an infected cat.

## Helping Cats Like Jasper

You may wonder what the best approach is to helping a stray cat in your neighborhood. One thing that is never a good idea is to ignore them or assume someone else will step in. Stray cats will eventually suffer the consequences of living outdoors without proper care: they can get into fights with other cats, be attacked by dogs or coyotes, get hit by cars, contract diseases from

fleas or small prey, or starve or freeze to death. And if they are not spayed or neutered, they will procreate, adding



**Jasper used to be a neighborhood tomcat. If your neighborhood has a cat roaming freely, please read Jasper's story.**

feral cats to your neighborhood. Female cats can have up to three litters per year, and young cats can procreate by the time they are 6 months of age. It doesn't take long for one stray cat to produce a large number of kittens who will be feral without socialization by humans at a very young age.

Turning to your local animal shelter can lead to mixed results because every county has a different policy about stray cats. Unfortunately, some shelters in our area will not help with stray cats, or they have overly-restrictive policies. Some shelters simply say: “It's not illegal for stray cats to live outdoors.” They even tell people not to feed stray cats because it will “discourage them from finding their way home.” This ignores the reality that too many people abandon their cats outdoors when they move. It also doesn't help cats that are truly lost and can't find their way home on their own. Some shelters will even turn



**Jasper is ready to leave the vet office after being hospitalized to treat the wound on his neck and to get neutered.**

## Stray vs. Feral

**It's important to distinguish “stray” from “feral” when talking about cats. A stray cat is homeless but friendly toward people. A feral cat is essentially a wild animal – typically born outdoors and not domesticated toward humans.**

## How to Help Cats in Your Neighborhood

For detailed tips, read “Steps to Take If You Find a Feral Cat or Friendly Stray Cat” on our website at: [www.spcanova.org/feral-stray-cats](http://www.spcanova.org/feral-stray-cats)

their backs on cats that are clearly in distress – sick or malnourished – but not “sick enough” for the shelter to help them. Too

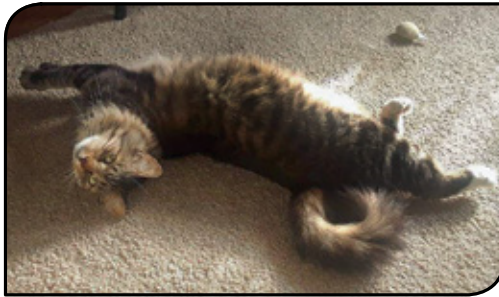
often, “sick enough” means the cat must have an open wound or broken leg.

Because many shelters don’t take in stray cats, and it’s difficult to know how many private, non-profit animal rescue organizations take them in, SPCA NOVA chooses to give priority to rescuing strays. Unfortunately, limited resources affect how many we can help. What is most important for you, as a member of your community, is to take action to make sure stray cats in your community get help.

### Steps You Can Take

Here are a few steps you can take to help stray cats in your neighborhood:

1. Try to determine if the cat has a home (and that the cat isn’t simply a neighbor’s indoor-outdoor cat).



Jasper is happy in his foster home where he can play and be king of his domain, but he’s still looking for a forever home.

- Talk to neighbors.
  - Post notices on community online networks, such as Facebook or Nextdoor.
  - Place signs around the neighborhood.
  - Contact local shelters to file a “Found Cat Report.”
2. Provide food, water, and shelter.
3. Email multiple animal rescue organizations for advice or assistance.
4. Consider adopting the cat yourself or commit to finding the cat a home through your own community networks.

### Jasper is a Lucky Boy

Jasper is one of the lucky ones, even though he lived outdoors long enough to become malnourished and contract FIV. He’s now safely in SPCA NOVA’s



care, and he’s getting the veterinary care he needs.

What is so amazing is how sweet and loving he is. He was initially a bit nippy, but that was likely a defense mechanism he used to establish boundaries with people until he realized he was safe. In fact, once Jasper establishes a relationship with you, you are his forever buddy. He climbs into your lap, sleeps by your side, talks to you, and follows you from room to room.

Jasper has handled the many trips back and forth to the vet amazingly well. His initial neck wound has healed nicely. However, Jasper has had lesions on his skin that became infected because his FIV makes it harder for him to fight off infection. In addition, after a lot of trial and error, we have concluded he

has allergies. Jasper has started a trial diet with hypoallergenic food to address his potential food allergies. We will need to consider allergy medication if the food change doesn’t resolve the symptoms.

Jasper is still looking for a loving forever home. We know the right person is out there for him. In the meantime, his previous foster mom, Natasha, and his current foster mom, Mandy, adore this sweet boy and can’t imagine how he ended up outdoors fending for his life in the first place.

### In the Future

The next time you see that neighborhood tom, or any stray cat, please take a good long look. They won’t just “go away,” and if you don’t help them, who will?

*\*Title and concept for this story was originally written by Sandy Soto and appeared in our Spring/Summer 2002 newsletter about a cat named Deano.*

# Two Senior Dogs Get Second Chance

Sometimes, just when everything is going perfect, life throws you a curve ball. It can be hard enough to explain to a person, but how do you explain to a dog that everything will be ok?

From early puppyhood, Bacon lived a quiet life in rural southwestern Virginia as the constant companion of her person, a disabled Vietnam veteran. When she was two years old, her “dad” adopted another puppy, named Cindy. From then on, the two beagle mixes were inseparable. Cindy learned from her big sister, and Bacon looked out for less-confident Cindy.

Then their world turned upside down when their person passed away unexpectedly. Suddenly, they were without their beloved person and the home they had known virtually their entire lives. The gentleman had no family, but friends and neighbors knew how

much he had loved Bacon and Cindy, so they took action to make sure the dogs had a safe place to stay. The girls were boarded at their long-time animal clinic for months while efforts were made to rehome them.

Fortunately, Sarah, whose rescue efforts frequently transfer dogs to SPCA NOVA, uses the animal clinic where Bacon and Cindy were staying. She reached out to us in 2018 to see if we could take the two senior beagles, then 11 and 9 years old. A condition of the transfer agreement was that the dogs be placed together. Placing one senior dog is hard enough. Placing two seniors together was going to *really* hard. But their sad story moved us, so we agreed to take the dogs in spring 2018.

## Life with SPCA NOVA

Bacon and Cindy settled into life at the Ragged Mountain Dogs kennel.

Cindy, a lovable, outgoing sweetheart, clung to her sister, while welcoming the hugs and pets from Lisa Reid, who runs the kennel, and SPCA NOVA volunteers and visitors at our adoption fairs. Bacon, as befits an older sister, was more serious and aloof.

After months without success finding a new home for the girls, we were thrilled when Brian and Ryan came to our last adoption fair of the year specifically looking at Bacon and Cindy. They had previously nursed a rescued dog back to health, so we knew they were invested in their dogs’ well-being. Because of various commitments and travel, Brian and Ryan had to wait until January to take Bacon and Cindy home for a trial placement. The dogs settled in and were officially adopted two weeks later. Bacon became Bacon Marie, and Cindy became Cindy Lou.

## New Home

We recently reached out to Ryan for an update. She says that Cindy Lou warmed up to them quickly, enjoying snuggles and belly rubs. Bacon Marie took a little more time to warm



Bacon Marie and Cindy Lou love to sit in the bay window and watch the world.

up and still isn’t 100% with them. She wonders if she has a little dementia or perhaps still experiences some grief. Most of the time, though, she does well and loves to have her ears and belly rubbed.

Their favorite thing to do is to sit in the front bay window and watch the people, cars, and dogs going by. Cindy Lou likes to sit on the back of the couch like a cat! They absolutely love getting in the car to go on short hikes. Because Bacon Marie’s back legs have a little arthritis, they keep the walks short. Luckily, the girls don’t associate the car with going to the vet, because they don’t like the vet very much.

They’ve met new cousins in New York, a doxie named Yoshi and a lab mix named Amelia, and they love them both! During the summer, they became bunny-obsessed! There are a lot of rabbits in the neighborhood, so they watched them out the window and loved



ABOVE: Cindy Lou loves being swaddled.

LEFT: Bacon Marie loves to be outside.

following them around or sniffing them out on their walks. They both love sniffing and laying around in the backyard.

Cindy Lou likes to snuggle with and bite on pillows, and she loves being swaddled in a blanket. She isn't much for playing with toys, but she really likes acorns. She brings them inside sometimes and throws them around. Ryan and Brian think it's a hoot!

Bacon Marie is a big toy hoarder. She loves her soft toys and doesn't tear them up but instead actually protects them. She has a stash of her favorites on the window seat so she can keep an eye on them, and if they are taken away for laundering or to be put away, she brings them back out again.

Bacon Marie and Cindy Lou are still attached to each other. They check in with each other every morning since Cindy Lou sleeps upstairs in bed with Brian and Ryan and Bacon Marie sleeps downstairs on the couch. Ryan thinks she's protecting them from intruders.

Hopefully, the girls feel at home again. And even if they haven't forgotten their former "dad," they can enjoy the love that Brian and Ryan provide and the new pleasures in their day-to-day lives. We're so very glad to have been able to give Bacon Marie and Cindy Lou a second chance at life and love in their new home.

# Special Thanks

## THANK YOU TO

the following corporations and their employees for their Employee Giving and Matching Gifts Programs:

- Accenture
- Allstate
- AT&T
- ECHO, Employee Charity Organization of Northrop Grumman
- IBM
- The Marilyn G. Bernard Charitable Fund, a Donor Advised Fund of Renaissance Charitable Foundation
- PricewaterhouseCoopers

## THANK YOU TO

all of our supporters who contribute through workplace giving under:

- America's Charities
- Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)
- Commonwealth of Virginia Campaign (CVC)
- Global Impact
- Local United Way campaigns

**BIG SHOUT OUT** to Rocket Frog Brewing Company and Verity Speed and Strength of Sterling. Verity Speed and Strength held a Beer Mile fundraiser on June 15 to support the ASPCA and the SPCA of Northern Virginia! We thank all of the participants who paid for the privilege of running a mile, stopping every 400 meters to drink a beer. It was a glorious day for the run, along with great food and fun with friends while raising lots of money for rescued animals.

**SEVENTH GRADER ELLIE**, for the 2nd year in a row, decided to help animals in her community. She contacted her neighbors to let them know that she was collecting donations and supplies for SPCA NOVA cats and dogs. She gave them suggestions about what we needed, and they jumped in to help. Earlier this year, Ellie delivered "the goods" on an adoption day and spent some time cuddling our cute dogs.

**Ellie presents her donations for this year.**



## Dog Adoption Fairs

### Weber's Pet Supermarket

11021 Lee Hwy  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
(703) 385-3766

**Saturdays**  
**12:30 to 3 p.m.**

**January**  
11 & 25

**February**  
8 & 22

**March**  
14 & 28

**April**  
11 & 25

*Schedule subject to change*

**View full calendar at**  
**[www.spcanova.org/](http://www.spcanova.org/events)**  
**events**

## Cat & Kitten Adoptions

### Meet Our Cats

You can arrange to meet available cats and kittens by appointment in their foster homes. We also hold periodic kitten adoption fairs from late Spring to early Fall.

**View details at**  
**[www.spcanova.org/](http://www.spcanova.org/events)**  
**events**



# Gifts in Remembrance

SPCA NOVA welcomes donations made in memory or honor of someone special in your life. Please include the name and address of the person you would like notified of your donation, along with the name of the person or pet being remembered or honored.

## In Memory of

- ♥ **"Aggie" Deathe**  
~ Dana Meeker
- ♥ **"Amanda," "Carrie," & "Bailee" Kerns**  
~ Lucinda Kerns
- ♥ **"Angel"**  
~ Deborah Outlaw
- ♥ **"Annabelle"**  
~ Robert Cox
- ♥ **"Bennie," in loving memory of my best friend**  
~ Joe & Lynn Field
- ♥ **"Biscuit"**  
~ Teresa Arnold  
~ Katie McHenry
- ♥ **"Butterscotch" & "Topaz"**  
~ Petra & Douglas Raymond
- ♥ **"Casey"**  
~ Alyssa Harry  
~ Jay Kloosterboer & Barbara Zicari
- ♥ **"Casper," adopted in 1988**  
~ Carol Goldberg
- ♥ **"Cecil"**  
~ Dana Meeker
- ♥ **"Charlie" Waugh**  
~ Christina Luebbert
- ♥ **"Cooper" Power**  
~ Sara Mallick
- ♥ **"Dixie," adopted in 2006**  
~ Laurie Kovaleski
- ♥ **"Ebony"**  
~ Carolyn Wood
- ♥ **"Fava Bean"**  
~ Diane Laaksonen
- ♥ **"Freckles" Bolanos**  
~ Corinne Monogue
- ♥ **"Ginger" Soto**  
~ Dana Meeker
- ♥ **"Ginger" and "Sugar" Soto**  
~ Kathleen MacKinnon
- ♥ **"Jackie"**  
~ Lora & Kevin O'Brien
- ♥ **"Leah"**  
~ Janet Spore
- ♥ **"Lily" & "Shamrock"**  
~ Nicholas Theodorson
- ♥ **"Lola"**  
~ James Overdahl & Janis Johnson
- ♥ **"Lucy" Smith**  
~ Cheryl D'Amato
- ♥ **"Max" & "Doozer"**  
~ Kathleen MacKinnon  
~ Dana Meeker  
~ Penny Vaughn
- ♥ **"Minnie" & "Hanibal"**  
~ Christa Biber
- ♥ **"Molly"**  
~ Jane Shapiro
- ♥ **"Molly" Simon**  
~ Laurie Robey
- ♥ **"Moochie," my darling calico**  
~ Denise Kallio
- ♥ **"Mr. Buddy"**  
~ Megan Bleichner
- ♥ **"Muddy"**  
~ Janice Godfrey
- ♥ **"Muddy" Lipsit**  
~ Mary Cross
- ♥ **"Ollie," neighborhood greeter and great dog**  
~ James Overdahl & Janis Johnson
- ♥ **"Oliver" & "Orlando," our beloved cats who migrated with us to the USA**  
~ Marilyn Miles
- ♥ **"Padre," in support of senior cats**  
~ Thomas Berg
- ♥ **"Pepe"**  
~ Melanie Brown
- ♥ **"Petie Pie"**  
~ Gail Henshaw
- ♥ **"Princess," light of my life**  
~ Lene Jensen
- ♥ **"Radar" Berg-Mues**  
~ Jennifer Lefurgy
- ♥ **"Ranger," in memory of a wonderful life**  
~ James Overdahl & Janis Johnson
- ♥ **"Reeces" Keller**  
~ Nancy Law Paredes
- ♥ **"Rhubarb"**  
~ Lynn Newbill
- ♥ **"Sadie" Arganese**  
~ Carolyn Englar
- ♥ **"Sam" Till, 2013-2017**  
~ Tom Till
- ♥ **Wonderful "Sammy" & glorious "Fanny"**  
~ Chris Till
- ♥ **"Scooter," who came to us from SPCA NOVA in 2002 and was our loyal companion for 17 years**  
~ James Overdahl & Janis Johnson
- ♥ **"Sherman" Cox from friends and colleagues at WETA**  
~ Iris Drayton-Spann  
~ Patti Parson
- ♥ **"Teagan" Kijora**  
~ Ali Mallon
- ♥ **"Theo"**  
~ Virginia Paulus
- ♥ **"Titan"**  
~ Alexandra Mozgovaya
- ♥ **"Tusker"**  
~ Dana Vogel
- ♥ **"Woodward"**  
~ Lorraine Ralston

## Shopping Can Save Lives!

Finish your last-minute holiday shopping online and help SPCA NOVA at the same time. Shop at AmazonSmile or through iGive or Goodshop, and a portion of your purchase will be donated to SPCA NOVA!

Start your shopping at [www.spcanova.org/shop](http://www.spcanova.org/shop)



## Need Help Getting Your Pet Spayed or Neutered?

Spay Inc. provides low-cost spay/neuter referrals for dogs & cats in Northern Virginia

**Easy to Apply & Everyone Qualifies!**

Simply fill out a request form online or call and leave a voice mail message.



a program of the SPCA of Northern Virginia

[www.spay.org](http://www.spay.org)  
(703) 522-7920



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~ Katharine Norris
- ♥ **Andree Barsodi**  
~ Gloria Eaker
- ♥ **Betty Weimer**  
~ Phillip Weimer
- ♥ **Bowden**  
~ Danielle Berube
- ♥ **Carl Crampton**  
~ John M & Priscilla Taylor
- ♥ **Corporal Bradley J. Schmitt**  
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~ Kristin Weaver
- ♥ **Lance Corporal Giancarlo Y. Goyone**  
~ Michael Nassoïy
- ♥ **Lola Griffin**  
~ Carol Schultz
- ♥ **MemoryMaker**  
~ Jan Mccooy
- ♥ **Morna Sheehy, loving mother of Lauren Sheehy**  
~ Crystal Woodall
- ♥ **My two deceased beagles**  
~ Barbara Cook
- ♥ **Nan Roman**  
~ Malcolm & Kathleen Schweiker
- ♥ **Nancy Hearn Johnson**  
~ Karen Polizos
- ♥ **Reiko Hartley**  
~ Cathy Lemmon
- ♥ **Susan Claire Griffing, an amazing cat lover**  
~ Owen Griffing
- ♥ **Thomas Q Miller**  
~ The Department of Mathematical Sciences, USMA
- ♥ **Webb Davis**  
~ Kathleen Black  
~ Kathryn Burchell  
~ "Boo" Campbell  
~ Richard Duncan  
~ Lorie Henley  
~ Marylou Hodges  
~ Charles Huber  
~ Rappawan Inc  
~ The Steve Jenkins Family  
~ Louise Labarca  
~ John & Jane Rhodes  
~ Joseph Silek  
~ Arnold M & Phyllis Williams
- ♥ **Zoe Howard**  
~ Glenn Silver

## In Honor of

- ♥ **"Abby Mudpuddle" Kerns**  
~ Lucinda Kerns
- ♥ **"Aprila"**  
~ Petra & Douglas Raymond
- ♥ **"Baxter's" 10th birthday (SPCA Alumnus)**  
~ Elizabeth Bartky
- ♥ **"Henry" - our boy; who rescued who?**  
~ Chris Till
- ♥ **"Holly" & "Mistletoe"**  
~ Tracy & Gordon Clement
- ♥ **"Ino" & "Dumpling"**  
~ Vincent & Maureen La Piana
- ♥ **"Mango" & "Dash"**  
~ Angel & David Fischer
- ♥ **"Mia," my best friend, my rescued min-Pin/Chi mix**  
~ Lisa-Marie DiGiulio
- ♥ **"Scully" & "Scrappy"**  
~ Patty Wiles
- ♥ **"Simba" & "Mittens"**  
~ Eric Roseman
- ♥ **Amanda**  
~ Christopher Frost
- ♥ **Anne & Phil Stone**  
~ John & Ruth Stone
- ♥ **Avery Bruner**  
~ Frank Bruner
- ♥ **Bock, Parkinson, & Woodrow**  
~ Chris Prochaska
- ♥ **Cait Toop's birthday**  
~ Brian Hull
- ♥ **Caroline Curran's 4th Birthday**  
~ Christian & Carly Curran  
~ Lauren Dymtrow  
~ Tracy Lewis  
~ Sarah Moretti
- ♥ **Christina Duenas Contaldi, Merry Christmas**  
~ Michael LeBar
- ♥ **Claude Pardes**  
~ Sylvia & Irwin Rosenthal
- ♥ **Connor's birthday, from proud Dad & Mom**  
~ Stephan Chan
- ♥ **Doris Patteson - Happy Mother's Day**  
~ Erin Hanan
- ♥ **Dr. Alicia Boyce at VCA Woodbridge Animal**  
~ Laurie Kovaleski
- ♥ **Dr. Kirchart**  
~ Christa Biber
- ♥ **Eileen Hanrahan**  
~ Joanne Hanrahan
- ♥ **Elizabeth Reyes**  
~ David Cole
- ♥ **Hayley Alberth's Birthday**  
~ Susan Indrisano  
~ James Schwab
- ♥ **J T Bock's Birthday**  
~ Chris Prochaska
- ♥ **Jennifer Schramm**  
~ Matthew Turner
- ♥ **John Klenk, Jr**  
~ John & Linda Klenk
- ♥ **Kathleen MacKinnon, for her 30+ years of service to U.S. EPA!**  
~ From current and former Office of Web Communications colleagues  
~ Karen Scott
- ♥ **Lisa Stover**  
~ Kimberly Swank
- ♥ **Luke Puryear's birthday**  
~ Eric Frels  
~ Maria Escudero  
~ Jennifer Puryear
- ♥ **Marissa Perilla's Birthday**  
~ Giselle Forman  
~ Laurie Henley  
~ Erica Herrera  
~ Samantha Jones  
~ Tin Nguyen  
~ Shannon Schafer  
~ Devon Smith  
~ Kerry Turek  
~ David Viale  
~ Holly Yamber
- ♥ **Marriage of Dave & Gabrielle McGinnis**  
~ AAA Maintenance Solutions LLC
- ♥ **Molly Griffin's birthday**  
~ Carol Schultz
- ♥ **Pam & John Day**  
~ Susan Falzone  
~ Alison Graves
- ♥ **Pat Sitnik**  
~ Terry & Julianna Jefferson
- ♥ **Payson**  
~ Theresa Varner
- ♥ **Robin**  
~ Allyson Donavos
- ♥ **Sophia Campbell's birthday**  
~ Judith Brown
- ♥ **Sundance**  
~ Janet Spore
- ♥ **Susan Cappitelli**  
~ Christopher Neumann
- ♥ **Tara (aka Rosa) Fye**  
~ James & Renee Fye
- ♥ **Terry Gehringer**  
~ Kathryn Ernst
- ♥ **Velvet Moroney**  
~ James Moroney
- ♥ **Winston**  
~ Scott Allender

## Vet Bills *from page 1*

(the least expensive option). With the ASPCA plans, you can decide what kind of deductible you want (\$100, \$250, or \$500); what the plan will cover (from \$5,000 to unlimited); and how much reimbursement you want (70, 80, or 90 percent). However, these options affect the amount you pay, with the lowest rate coming in around \$15 a month.

Numerous other organizations now offer pet insurance, so we recommend finding one that's right for your animal and your budget. Consumer Affairs offers a comparison of more than a dozen pet insurance companies, as do other resources, such as Mashable, the Canine Journal, 365 Pet Insurance, and The Balance.

In addition to price, pay attention to annual deductibles, when and if rates increase as your pet gets older, and whether a wellness plan is included for what you're paying. For instance, it might make sense to select a more expensive comprehensive plan than to pay a minimal amount for a basic plan that only offers scheduled benefits.

Another thing to ask about when researching plans is what kind of restrictions there are, especially where age and breed are concerned.

According to PetMD, some policies will have a minimum and/or maximum age for enrollment. The restrictions may be different for cats and dogs and also some breeds. There may be exclusions based on specific breeds of cats and dogs that have known health risks (see "Breed-Specific Health Concerns" below for examples). Also, ask if they have restrictions on covering bilateral conditions (things that affect both sides of the body, such as hips or eyes). Some policies may restrict how much they cover for these conditions.

Because each situation is unique, only you can decide what company and plan is right for your pet – and for you. Whatever you decide, be sure to have a plan set in advance, well before it's needed because no pet insurance company will cover pre-existing conditions, although you can still obtain insurance for future injuries and illnesses down the road. In other words, it's a good idea to think about pet insurance *before* your pet has an emergency that results in expensive vet bills.

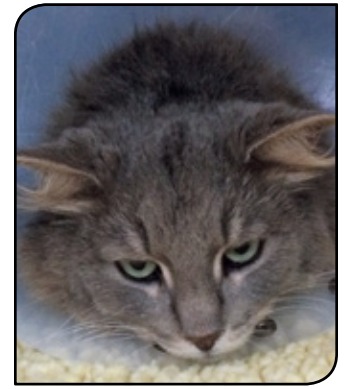
### Low-Cost Vet Clinics

If you're a resident of Washington, D.C., or the surrounding area (including Northern Virginia) and have an

income of \$55,000 or less, Humane Rescue Alliance (HRA) offers discounted full-service veterinary care via their medical center, which is open Monday through Friday. More details can be found on HRA's website at [www.humanerescuealliance.org/medicalcenter](http://www.humanerescuealliance.org/medicalcenter).

However, this option wouldn't help much if you have an emergency when the center isn't open.

In Richmond, Va., Helping Hands offers low-cost surgery for dogs and cats, which they provide at a fraction of the cost because they only perform outpatient surgeries and



Jax wears a protective cone to prevent him from pulling out his urinary catheter.

dental work (no diagnostics or overnight stays). Clients seeking surgery at Helping Hands must bring diagnostics with them, such as blood work or x-rays, for the surgeons to review prior to surgery. Clients are also responsible for ensuring

## Breed-Specific Health Concerns

**F**ollowing are the top five dog and cat breeds and their breed-specific health concerns.

### Dogs

- Labrador Retrievers – Obesity
- German Shepherd – Hip dysplasia
- Golden Retriever – Skin allergies, heart problems
- Bulldog – Respiratory problems
- Beagle – Epilepsy

### Cats

- Siamese – Kidney and eye problems, skin disorders, asthma, hip dysplasia
- Persian – Breathing and eye problems, kidney problems, heart disease, hip dysplasia
- Maine Coon – Heart disease
- Ragdoll – Hyperthyroidism, heart and kidney problems
- Bengal – Digestive disorders, eye problems, kidney disease, cystitis

Dog information from: [www.pets.webmd.com](http://www.pets.webmd.com)

Cat information from: [www.iheartcats.com](http://www.iheartcats.com) and [www.admiral.com](http://www.admiral.com)

# YES!

I want to help rescue animals in Northern Virginia.

Your tax-deductible donation to SPCA of Northern Virginia makes it possible for us to rescue animals in need, provide them with shelter and nutritious food, medical care, training, and nurturing care, all in preparation for adoptions into homes of their own. Thank you for being a force for animal welfare with your generosity!



## Give a Homeless Animal A Second Chance

Donate online:  
[www.spcanova.org](http://www.spcanova.org)

### Donation Amount:

- ☐ \$25    ☐ \$50    ☐ \$75  
☐ \$100    ☐ \$250    ☐ \$500  
☐ Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### Memorial Gifts:

- ☐ In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ In Honor of: \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Please send me information on how to leave a bequest to SPCA NOVA.

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Sign me up for your:    ☐ e-Newsletter    ☐ Print Newsletter

Make checks payable to **SPCA of Northern Virginia** and mail to:  
**SPCA of Northern Virginia, P.O. Box 100220, Arlington, VA 22210**

If your company participates with the United Way or the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), designate donation to "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals of Northern Virginia."



If your company participates with the America's Charities Campaign, you can donate to the SPCA of Northern Virginia, #19137.

The SPCA of Northern Virginia is an IRS-registered 501(c)(3) charity, EIN 54-1627788, listed under the name Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals of Northern Virginia.

post-operation hospital stays with their own vet following the surgery, if needed.

### Loans

The Animal Welfare League of Arlington has a Veterinary Assistance Program that offers small no-interest loans to pet guardians whose animals need an emergency procedure, but who cannot afford the cost up front. Other shelters may have similar programs.

### Grants

Some nonprofits, such as RedRover Relief and the Pet Fund (which is focused on non-emergency care, such as heart

disease), offer grants. Unfortunately, the grants are often small (\$200 on average), and they receive more applications than they can cover, which means your application isn't guaranteed to be approved.

### CareCredit

CareCredit cards work similarly to a regular credit card, allowing you to pay your bill a little at a time over a period of months. There is typically a promotional introductory period with no APR (annual percentage rate) that usually lasts between 12 and 18 months. But keep in mind, if it takes you longer than the desig-

nated period to pay off your bill, you might end up having to pay an APR of up to 26.99 percent for new accounts, although you may be able to transfer the remaining balance to a different credit card with lower interest rates. Of course, what is most desirable is that you are able to pay off the CareCredit amount during the no-interest introductory period.

### Crowdfunding

If you're comfortable asking for help, another option to consider is launching a GoFundMe or Waggle.com campaign or running a Facebook fundraiser to solicit dona-

tions from family, friends, and others to help pay for expensive medical procedures for your cats and dogs.

### Conclusion

It's heart-wrenching to think about needing emergency care for your cat or dog, but it's important to be prepared for when this could happen to you. Thus, investing in pet insurance might be the most reliable and affordable method to ensure that you're prepared. As with all insurance, make sure you read all the terms and conditions in the fine print so you know exactly what is included and what is not.



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## Preparing for the Unexpected

Whether you have a cat or  
dog, make a plan on how to  
handle surprise vet bills

page 1



## Finding More than One Perfect Match

Sometimes a dog's best  
friend is another dog

page 3



## Helping Stray Cats in Your Neighborhood

It's never a good idea to  
do nothing when you see a  
stray cat

page 4