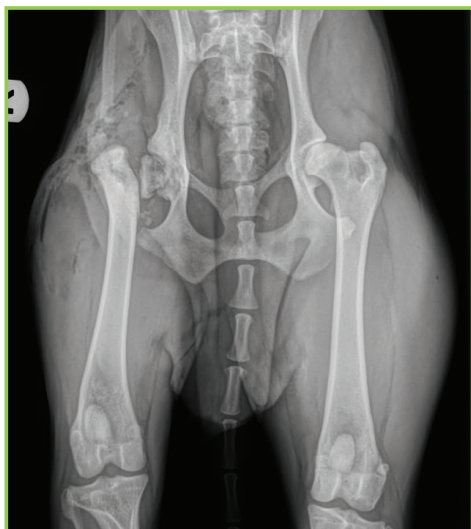


## The Duchess of Richmond

Volunteers Shawn and Bill Riester have a special place in their hearts for foster dogs. Not only has the couple fostered dozens of dogs over the years, they found many of those pets loving, lasting homes as part of our **Adoption Ambassadors** program. Through Adoption Ambassadors, volunteers like the Riesters bring shelter dogs into their care, help unite them with new guardians and even process the adoptions. Pets get the best of both worlds — a break from the kennels and a smooth transition from one home to the next.

A recent foster dog of the Riesters was 1-year-old Duchess. When Duchess entered the care of the Richmond SPCA, she was suffering from a painful injury to her right hind leg that was interfering with her ability to run and walk. X-rays performed by our veterinary team showed a broken hip coupled with scar tissue. The injury was old and never healed properly, leading to severe arthritis and significant pain. The cause, we discovered, was a fall from an apartment balcony in the prior home.



*Duchess' broken right femur can be seen in her pre-surgery X-ray images.*

Associate Veterinarian Dr. David Molinas performed surgery to create a new joint, and Duchess underwent several days of rehabilitation before ultimately wiggling her way into the home of Bill and Shawn, where her recovery continued, and the Riesters became her ambassadors for adoption. While Bill and Shawn knew Duchess' stay was only temporary, they could not help but fall in love with her warm and affectionate personality. "We've fostered well over 100 dogs, and she's been one of the best. She's just a gem," Bill said.

*Duchess' story continues on the next page.*



*Duchess gets some love from Manager of Annual Giving Erin Tidsworth.*



Our **Cinderella Fund** is dedicated to helping the sick, injured and infant animals we take into our care. All funds raised through this issue of the Pet Post will support our Cinderella pets, like the ones featured in this newsletter, who depend on our staff, volunteers, donors and adopters to make their happily ever afters possible.



Now in a loving home, Duchess' goofy personality shines.

*Duchess' story continued*

It wasn't long before Duchess' adopters, Carly and Nick Wytas, discovered her photo on our website and scheduled time to visit Bill and Shawn to meet Duchess. Immediately, the Wytases' resident dog bonded with Duchess, and the rest, as they say, was history. Duchess found her perfect match, and in her new home, she continues to undergo physical therapy so that she can have a pain-free and fully mobile future. According to Carly, Duchess is "the perfect addition" to their family and the "snuggliest" dog, who never fails to greet her new family with "a smile and lots of kisses."

Donors like you make happy outcomes like this one — and thousands of others — possible. **With your help, the Richmond SPCA is a vital resource for pets with medically intensive needs in our community.** Thank you from the bottom of our — and their — hearts. For more information about our Adoption Ambassadors program, visit [richmondspca.org/adoption-ambassadors](http://richmondspca.org/adoption-ambassadors).

## A refuge from the cruelty of commercial breeding

In September the Richmond SPCA transferred into our care 34 Maine Coon cats and five dogs from the USDA. That transfer followed a routine inspection, the results of which were alarming, conducted earlier this year by the USDA of a commercial breeding facility in Chesterfield County. During the inspection, pets were found living in filthy conditions and suffering from untreated medical conditions. When the USDA informed the breeder legal action was likely, the breeder relinquished some of the animals. At the request of the USDA, the Richmond SPCA came to the aid of adult dogs, cats of all ages, nursing moms and some neonatal kittens whose mothers were so sick they were unable to provide milk for their nursing babies.

Upon the pets' arrival to our humane center, each one received an intake examination and veterinary care. Nearly all of the rescued animals were malnourished and underweight, and most made significant improvements after receiving healthy diets, vaccinations and treatments for parasites. The bottle baby kittens were sent immediately into foster care. There were some pets, however, who required more intensive medical treatment, including one cat with a severe case of flea anemia who received a lifesaving blood transfusion and an adult dog who required orthopedic surgery.



A nursing mom and four 2-week-old kittens were among the rescued cats.



Bigoli arrived in our humane center weighing 9 pounds, underweight for a cat of her size, but is now happy and healthy in her adoptive home.

This horrific situation, which includes an ongoing investigation, is a sad reminder of the inhumane treatment animals suffer at the hands of commercial breeders. **Thanks to friends, adopters and animal lovers like you, all 39 cats and dogs are now in loving homes, safe from the cruel and neglectful conditions they once knew.** We are deeply grateful to have a community of passionate supporters who invest in our work and share our belief that every animal deserves an enriched life, full of love and companionship.

## For the love of Lima Beans

When a 5-year-old cat named Lima Beans came to the Richmond SPCA earlier this year, he had a large wound on the side of his neck that wasn't responding to ongoing medical treatment. **We knew his case would be a challenging one to resolve, but our veterinary team didn't waste any time getting started.**

Our medical staff biopsied and cultured tissue from the wound to help determine the cause of Lima Beans' lesion. Ultimately, Associate Veterinarian Dr. David Molinas diagnosed Lima Beans with a very uncommon skin condition called Feline Idiopathic Ulcerative Dermatitis (IUD), which in layman's terms is a localized ulcer caused by self-trauma and occurring on the neck or between the shoulder blades.

Most likely, nerve overstimulation, an allergic reaction or environmental stress triggered the wound, and to give Lima Beans the best possible chance for recovery, our team of veterinary professionals treated all three possible causes.

Dr. Molinas started Lima Beans on medications to reduce nerve pain and disrupt feelings of itchiness and introduced a prescription hypoallergenic diet to rule out food allergies. Lima Beans then started receiving special attention from Feline Enrichment Specialist Abby Barnett, who leads a team of specialized volunteers — our Blue Team — who focus on providing enrichment to the cats in our shelter. Under Abby's guidance, Blue Team members provided low-stress activities and an enrichment schedule for Lima Beans to improve his emotional health.

Soon, we saw signs of Lima Beans' condition improving, and his sweet and social personality began to emerge. While providing enjoyable activities for him, Abby discovered Lima Beans was indeed a joyful and snuggly cat. "He's a sweetheart," she said. "He loves social interaction. When you walk into his room, you must pet him for a few minutes before he's interested in playing. He just wants to be loved."

After six months of treatment and support from our shelter veterinary and enrichment teams, Lima Beans has made a full recovery, and he's ready to find his new family. **We are grateful to you — our extraordinary supporters — who provide us with the resources to give special pets like Lima Beans the best opportunity to live happy and healthy lives.** Because of you, the Richmond SPCA is a safe place for cats like Lima Beans.



*Lima Beans wears his signature orange collar.*



*Feline Enrichment Specialist Abby Barnett cuddles Lima Beans.*

## Alumni Updates



When **Panda** was first adopted in December 2021, she was a bit cautious and shy. We're thrilled to hear that she's come out of her shell!



**Harlowe**, adopted in January of this year, has always been a goofy girl, but particularly enjoys green beans.



Adopted in early September, **Cyra** is described by her adopter as spunky, goofy, playful and loving.



Please tag us in your Richmond SPCA alumni pet photos with [@richmondspca](https://www.instagram.com/richmondspca) or email us updates about your adopted pets at [info@richmondspca.org](mailto:info@richmondspca.org).

## Save the date! Saturday, March 23

Lace up your sneakers and leash up your dog at the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Dog Jog, 5K and Block Party, sponsored by Holiday Barn Pet Resorts. Your favorite spring event will be back before you even know it. The event features:

- Chip-timed 5K
- Free half-mile Little Paws Fun Run for kids
- One-mile Dog Jog for pets and their people
- Fun things to buy with 50+ vendors in our Marketplace
- Special activities at the Kids' and Pets' Fun Zones
- Block Party with live music, beer/food trucks and more



Sign up before March 1 and save \$10. Your support will help save the lives of homeless pets in the care of the Richmond SPCA.

[richmondspca.org/dogjog](http://richmondspca.org/dogjog)



## Cinderella Fund by the numbers

In our most recent fiscal year, we spent more than \$980,000 delivering pre-adoption veterinary services to 4,433 animals, 3,838 of whom required additional medical treatment beyond sterilization and preventative care. Here are some of the most significant conditions our Internal Veterinary Services team addresses with Cinderella Fund resources.

### Gastritis



Bamboo



1,063 cases treated in FY23

### Respiratory Conditions



The Ocho



735 cases treated in FY23

### Internal Parasites



Epcot



932 cases treated in FY23

### Heartworm Disease



Bartholomew



107 cases treated in FY23

Visit our YouTube channel to view a video featuring hounds who have found loving homes after receiving veterinary care at the Richmond SPCA.



# THANK YOU FOR SAVING THEIR LIVES



Paris



Uncle Leo



Pesto



Lyonne



Takeshi

The Richmond SPCA, founded in 1891, is a no-kill humane society dedicated to the principle that every life is precious. We provide essential care to more than 4,000 homeless animals each year or for approximately 300 cats and dogs every day. We deliver affordable veterinary care through our Susan M. Markel Veterinary Hospital to about 11,000 pet patients annually. The Richmond SPCA is an independent nonprofit, which is not a chapter or affiliate of any other organization with Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in its name, including but not limited to the ASPCA.

As a national leader in humane care and education, the Richmond SPCA is building a more compassionate community through education, adoption, low-cost, high-quality veterinary care, rehabilitation and more. For more information on our programs and services, please call 804-521-1300 or visit [richmondspca.org](http://richmondspca.org).

THE PET POST is published for friends of the Richmond SPCA.

A copy of our most recently-audited financial statements is on file with the Virginia Division of Consumer Affairs.

Since we became no-kill in 2002, you've helped us adopt 70,616 pets into loving homes!