

THE PET POST

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Veterinary Assistant Taylor with Oreo

CINDERELLA FUND ISSUE

Oreo: One Tough (and Sweet) Cookie

When Oreo's guardian was no longer able to provide for his care and made the difficult decision to surrender him to the Richmond SPCA, Oreo had advanced-stage glaucoma. As a result of the disease, his eyes had become enlarged and very painful.

Upon arrival to our center, Oreo was timid and wary about being in a new place with unknown people, but we caught glimpses of his sweet and affectionate personality as he began to recognize his new caretakers' voices. Oreo made fast friends with our staff, who were eager to provide him relief and comfort.

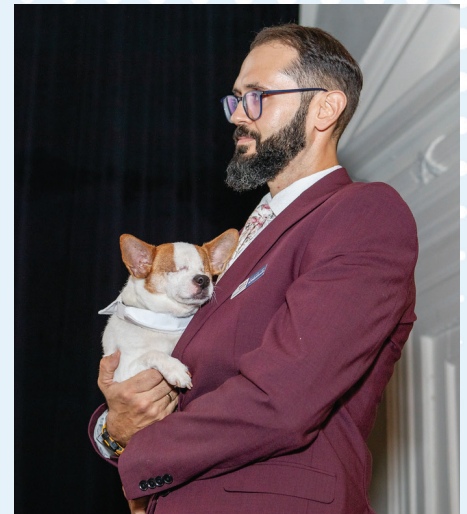
Unfortunately, Oreo's glaucoma had progressed beyond the point at which his vision could be restored. Our shelter veterinary team decided surgery to remove both of Oreo's eyes was the only way to relieve his pain. The surgery was complication-free.

Following his recovery, Oreo found his perfect match with adopters Bob and Jeannie. Jeannie is a long-time volunteer with the Richmond SPCA, and she and Bob have several other Richmond SPCA alumni at home, including others who are blind, making Bob and Jeannie experts at caring for a blind dog.

After just a few weeks in his new home, Oreo was a new dog with a new name: Marvin. The timid dog who was fearful of being touched was a distant memory. When he returned to our Susan M. Markel Veterinary Hospital for a check-up, staff were greeted by a cheerful, friendly pup who wanted nothing more than to be held by his people.

Marvin has settled easily into life with his new family, and according to Jeannie and Bob, he's had no trouble learning the layout of their home or his place in it. He even made a celebrity appearance at this year's Fur Ball, which benefits our Cinderella Fund, providing veterinary care for sick and injured homeless pets just like him.

With your support, we will provide more than \$1 million in veterinary care to sick, injured and neonatal pets sheltered at our humane center in the coming year. You are a critical partner in our mission to provide the education and resources necessary to achieve and sustain a no-kill community for pets like Oreo.



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.



THE LOOK OF LOVE

Saving kittens with rare congenital condition

The love and comfort our staff and volunteers provide for animals in need does not end at the conclusion of a shift. Not only do most have pets of their own, several team members also care for unowned, free-roaming cats in the community. In May, our adoption counselor Michelle found four very special kittens who needed a little extra help. Erin, Trudy, Kim and Kev were brought into the care of the Richmond SPCA, where all four litter mates were diagnosed with eyelid agenesis.

The issue is congenital and results in either underdeveloped eyelids or in some cases, no eyelid at all. These kittens were all missing large sections

of their upper eyelids. Without the critical protection of an eyelid, the kittens would suffer from chronically-dry, irritated eyes, causing pain, injury and in many cases, loss of the eye itself.

The kittens entered the care of the Richmond SPCA, where they had the best chance of receiving the specialized veterinary care they desperately needed. Associate Veterinarian Dr. David Molinas has a lot of experience correcting eyelid agenesis, and he was ready to help these four kittens. He performed a combination of surgeries on each kitten over the summer, with the goal of correcting the defect and providing them with the opportunity to live pain-free lives.

The primary procedure Dr. Molinas performed is called a “lip-to-lid transposition.” The corners of the cat’s lips are used as a graft to create new eyelids. For the kittens who still had hairs irritating their delicate corneas, Hotz-Celsius procedures were performed to further expand their eyelids. Both of these procedures are technical and require the skills of a veterinary ophthalmologist, or in our case, a talented shelter surgeon, to be successful.

With the exception of Trudy, whose right eye was removed because it was too severely damaged to save, each kitten’s corrective surgeries successfully saved both eyes, allowing them to see the world clearly and without pain.

Erin, Trudy, Kim and Kev were adopted into loving homes, where they can live happy, healthy lives full of love thanks to the support of donors like you. With your help, the Richmond SPCA provides vital resources for vulnerable pets in our community, including those with complex medical needs. Thank you for helping us provide relief and comfort to helpless kittens like Erin, Trudy, Kim and Kev.



Scan this code to watch our 2024 Fur Ball video, where you can catch a glimpse of Erin when Dr. Molinas discusses lip-to-lid surgeries.

LASER VISION

Since its opening in 2016, our Susan M. Markel Veterinary Hospital has provided a critical service by offering high-quality veterinary care at a reduced cost to pets of guardians who income qualify as well as pets adopted from our center. The first of its kind in the Greater Richmond region, our facility ensures that families of modest means have access to affordable treatment options for their dogs and cats.

Sanford, adopted from the Richmond SPCA in 2015, is one of our longest-term patients and with his sweet demeanor and frequent visits, he is universally adored among hospital staff. Sanford, now a senior companion, visits the Susan M. Markel Veterinary Hospital on a weekly basis to receive laser therapy treatments to relieve pain caused by his osteoarthritis. As a bonus, he gets to wear an incredibly cool set of protective goggles during his treatment sessions!

The Susan M. Markel Veterinary Hospital is designed to operate at a significant net deficit – the fees paid for our services don't cover the cost of operating our low-cost practice. The generous support of donors like you fuels our lifesaving programs. Your kindness, benefitting pets and the people who love them, is the embodiment of our tagline, "compassion unleashed."



A DOGGONE GREAT DAY

In October, the Richmond SPCA partnered with Petco Love and Richmond Animal Care and Control (RACC) to provide free parvovirus, distemper and rabies vaccinations for owned dogs in our community. After a spike in the number of cases of parvovirus (a highly contagious and often fatal disease) in both shelter and owned dog populations resulting in some municipal shelters closing their doors, we sought to increase community immunity against the virus.

Thanks to a generous grant from Petco Love, which provided the combo parvo and distemper vaccine, our veterinary staff hosted a drive-through clinic at our humane center where approximately 300 dogs received free vaccinations to protect them from life-threatening viruses. The RACC veterinary team delivered a similar number of free rabies vaccines, which were generously purchased by the RACC Foundation.

We are grateful to our partners for helping make this drive-through clinic a smashing success for the animals. Together, a caring community creates an environment where all pets can thrive and live their best lives.



ALUMNI UPDATES



Tully, adopted in 2012



July, adopted in 2024



Thumper, adopted in 2024



Chips, adopted in 2024



Scout, adopted in 2022; Beet, adopted in 2013; Sprout, adopted in 2015 and Milo



Jimbo, adopted in 2024



The Richmond SPCA, founded in 1891, is central Virginia's oldest full-service humane society. Each year we serve more than 18,000 pets across the community in our shelter, veterinary hospital, spay and neuter clinic, training programs and pet retention services. Since becoming no-kill in 2002, the Richmond SPCA has found loving adoptive homes for more than 75,000 dogs and cats. We are an independent nonprofit and 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.

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.

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