



A publication of the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria

from the AVLA

2021 Year End

## **Senior Pets**

#### THE FUN'S JUST BEGINNING

From the looks of her Instagram page, the beige terrier mix dog named Macy is doing all right. Macy frolics in the yard, snoozes on the couch, cuddles with her people, listens to a little girl read her a story. No matter that she has only three legs and is a bit on the "senior" side.

"She's just a peaceful dog, and she fits right in with our loud, busy family," reports Julie DeFrain, who adopted Macy last March after meeting her at the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria (AWLA), shortly after the dog was transferred in from a rescue group in Florida. Macy blended quickly with DeFrain's household, made up of her husband, two children, ages 3 and 6, and DeFrain's parents, ages 72 and 75. DeFrain says she does most of the walking with Macy, her 6-year-old daughter handles most of the feeding and her parents take care of a lot of the snuggling.

At age 8, Macy is considered a senior dog. "We were just looking for a dog that fit our family and we were excited to love and spoil," DeFrain said.

"It was less about age for us and more about personality. The kids are completely in love with her."



DeFrain, a government attorney, says Macy has been her office mate while working at home during the pandemic. Macy's favorite activity, though, is watching TV with the kids or DeFrain's parents. "We weren't looking for a dog to go camping and hiking with," she said. "Macy's more of a yoga dog than a hiking dog."

The AWLA considers any animal aged 8 or older to be

## **Foster Homes Set Shelter Animals Up for Success**

#### PAGE 4

Where do animals who need a little more TLC go during their journey to their new home? Fosters!

#### **Celebrating Our Supporters**

#### PAGE 6

Meet a very special volunteer who has donated over 900 of service hours!

a senior, and seniors make up about 30 percent of the shelter's usual population. Seniors aren't just for seniors — they appeal to all adopter age brackets. "They are so much easier than puppies or younger animals and are generally well house trained," said AWLA Executive Director Stella Hanly. "Most of them are very grateful that they have a soft, warm place to live — and be loved."

(continues on page 4)



#### **Animal Welfare League of Alexandria**

4101 Eisenhower Avenue Alexandria, Virginia 22304

703.746.4774

**EIN** 54-0796610 **CFC** 92767 | **United Way** 8372

AlexandriaAnimals.org

#### **Board of Directors**

Julie Conway, Chair
Mark Davis, Vice Chair
Felipe Duran, Treasurer
Laura MacLean, DVM, Secretary
Victoria Barnes
Tamela Blalock
Dean DeGood
Kirk S. Fedder
Suzanne Goulden
Jeff Lutton
Cynthia Young

### **Hours of Operation**

To limit the spread of COVID-19 in our community, the AWLA is open **by appointment only** for community assistance and adoptions.

View our current operating status, available services and adoptable animals at AlexandriaAnimals.org.

## From the Desk of Stella Hanly

What a year 2021 has been!
With the arrival of our mobile
veterinary surgical van this past
spring, we have, for the first time in
our 75-year history, had the ability to
perform critical surgical procedures
at our facility. By the end of 2021,
our veterinary team performed
approximately 30% of all the surgical
procedures needed by our animals,
focusing particularly on spay or neuter
surgeries and dental procedures, both

In the field of animal welfare, as so many others, the last two years have

find their future families faster.

so important to the animals in our

care. This allows us not only to exceed our already top-notch level of care for animals, but it also means animals can

Executive Director Stella Hanly with adoptable kitten, Domino

been incredibly difficult all across the United States, and there have been many times our partners have needed our help. Answering their call, we have transferred animals from Florida, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas and West Virginia, as well as Virginia, Maryland and even one dog from Beirut.

In fact, in 2021 we exceeded the number of animals transferred from other locations over any previous year, helping nearly 850 animals find homes across our region.

This would not be possible without our animal-loving community, which welcomes these animals and gives us the support we need to provide them with the loving care they deserve.

And to our neighbors who have needed our help while times have been so tough, we have provided almost 1,000 free or low-cost vaccinations and microchips, distributed more than 50,000 pounds of pet food and supplies, and provided veterinary and transportation assistance to many more. Read more about these milestones and more on the next page.

None of this would have happened without the AWLA's amazing team of staff, volunteers, donors, adopters and foster families — YOU! Without you, we would not be able to go above and beyond to help these pets. Without you, the thousands of animals we assisted this year could not have received the help they needed. Without you, our community would not be the sanctuary that it is for animals and the people who love them. We are so grateful to you! And we're excited to look forward with you to learn what the next 75 years hold.

Stella P. Hanly, Executive Director

The Animal Welfare League of Alexandria presents

A game of finding homes and keeping families together in 2021

adoptions

of appointments led to adoption



animals fostered



fosters



spay/neuter vouchers provided



pounds of pet supplies provided



transferred in (That's 48%



animals received major medical treatment



3,240 calls to Animal Services

hours volunteered



**Proud** HUMAN ANIMAL SUPPORT SERVICES member!

proceed

animals



to 2022!

Animal Welfare League Alexandria **CHALLENGE** 

Achieve placement rate of more than 96% in 2021

animals each year

ria ars!

alth s of



City of Alexandria NOW named BETTER CITY FOR PETS by Mars Petcare!

# TAILS FROM THE AWLA

#### (continued from page 1)

Hanly has an extensive track record with senior pets — her family dog, Rupert, is going on 17, and she has hosted a series of seniors, including an 18-year-old cat, as office mates on their way to adoption. "They're so quiet, I absolutely love the company," she said. "For work mates, seniors are my favorites."

Some senior animals do experience health challenges, typically dental problems, arthritis and kidney issues. Often these can be well-managed by adopters, Hanly said.

Annie Sung, a 31-year-old Certified Public Accountant, had no experience with pets when she decided to adopt a senior Chihuahua mix known as Pepe from the AWLA. "Meeting him for the first time, I was thinking that this is a dog version of me," Sung recalled. Renamed Teddy, the dog was blind in one eye and soon after adoption lost sight in the other eye. Double surgery to remove the eyes put him on the right path, Sung says.

"He's just the sweetest dog," she said. "He's completely house-trained, doesn't bark, and all of my friends and the people he meets on the street like him."

Sung says Teddy's trust in her has blossomed as he has adapted to his loss of vision. As they walk together and Teddy approaches an unseen obstacle, Sung says "watch" and the dog stops. Then once the barrier is removed, she says "OK" and he moves forward. He now keeps pace with Sung and even will take off running. "It brings me a lot of joy to see how he's adapted," she said.

"I can't imagine my life without Teddy," Sung said. "I know it sounds corny, but I never thought I could love so much."



Annie Sung with Teddy. Blindness isn't stopping Teddy from enjoying life with Sung.

## **Foster Homes Set Shelter Animals Up for Success**



Let's say you're a 60-pound dog who is finding the kennel at the AWLA friendly and nurturing but a bit confining. And let's say that one day a kind person comes along and takes you to their house for a little vacation.

That's what happens regularly to some dogs, cats and other animals at the AWLA when they need a break on their journey to adoption. The foster program assists animals who are especially in need of time and care in a home environment, including very young animals, pets with special medical needs, animals who've been in the shelter environment for a longer time and could use a change of scenery, and owned pets temporarily held in the AWLA's Crisis Care program.

Prospective fosters start the process by signing up, then undergoing an orientation and evaluation of their specific interests and needs, followed by training and guidance from the AWLA staff. The AWLA provides all food and other supplies for the foster animals as well as a 24-hour hotline for fosters to call in emergencies. (continues on page 5)

(continued from page 4) Foster "mom" Sarah P. and her daughter, Destinye, now 17, began volunteering for the program three years ago. Despite Sarah's petite size they "somehow always got the bigger dogs, 60- to 70-pounders," she says. There was Ash, a Lab mix who, despite having behavioral issues in the past, behaved perfectly; Chocolate, a Lab mix who got so excited that he leapt toward other dogs until Sarah trained him to calm down with treats; Priscilla the anxious terrier mix who liked to nibble on blankets; Ben, a pit bull mix who chewed his leashes until the shelter provided a metal one for him, and many others. All were ultimately adopted.

"The larger, more active dogs need more space and more mental stimulation that they can better receive in a home environment," said AWLA Senior Manager of Veterinary and Foster Care Arianne Killen. "After a while at the AWLA, they can get a bit frustrated, and it's hard for us to get an idea of their true personalities."

Fostering helps gather that information, especially by placing animals in situations not available at the shelter. Spending time in a home that has a staircase, for example, can help AWLA staff answer a potential adopter's question: "Can he climb stairs?"

"If an animal has a track record in a home, it's much easier for them to get adopted," said AWLA Veterinary and Foster Care Coordinator Elena Carver. "If we can relay to potential adopters that an animal has turned out to be super-sweet, playful and did great with other animals in the home, they might take a chance they hadn't considered before."

#### More than 230 individuals and families fostered animals for the AWLA in 2021.

The need for foster volunteers has grown in the past year due to the harsh economic effects of the pandemic, leaving some people without stable housing and in need of temporary help with their pets.

Animals who are recovering from surgery or struggling with other medical challenges find the guiet and individual attention of foster homes critical to recovery.

One of foster Inbal Katz's favorite "patients" was a grayish pit bull — "with a face like a hippo" — called Baybee who was recovering from surgery after swallowing a foreign object. "She needed a lot of TLC," Katz recalled. "She was lying down a lot at first, but then started playing." Baybee began to shine in Katz's care, and, upon returning to the AWLA, Baybee was soon adopted.

A black and white senior dog named

Milk needed watching over after surgeries to remove masses in her mammary glands. "I tried to put bandages on her, but she wouldn't have it," Katz said. "So I got her a 'onesie' for dogs that covered the wound so she couldn't scratch it." Milk healed and soon found her family.

Foster homes open their doors to all kinds of animals. Foster Kerin Ord and her husband, Martin Parr, recently housed a mother chinchilla and her baby in a special



Spot gradually came out of her shell in a foster home and was eventually adopted.

area of their basement in Alexandria. They also patiently waited out a cat named Spot who was recovering from a traumatic injury and hid under a bed for more than a week, which is not uncommon with shy or unsocialized cats. The woman who adopted Spot lay on the floor next to the bed to view her.

A Shiba Inu dog who was scratching constantly from a severe case of mange would pose a challenge for any foster, but Ord and Parr were willing to take her on. With guidance from the AWLA's veterinary team, they gave her a series of medicated baths and were able to help her look and feel healthier, eventually helping to find an enthusiastic adopter for her.

Ord, whose household includes two cats and two dogs, says she and Parr are accustomed to animals with special needs. More than once they, like some other AWLA foster caregivers, have come to the conclusion that the best home for some foster animals in their care is with them. In fact, both of the couple's current canines, Josie and Stubby, started with them as fosters and went on to become full-time residents, now assisting with the parade of foster animals seeking a helping paw.





in the foster home of Kerin Ord and Martin Parr.

# **Supporting Alexandria's Animals**

#### MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR ANIMALS ACROSS THE COMMUNITY

When Nicole Parent started volunteering her time as a foster with the AWLA in 2018, she didn't realize exactly how much time it might involve.

"I started fostering while my husband, who is an activeduty army officer, was stationed outside of the area, and I was here on my own for a few years. It was nice to have some company!" she said.

Every year, hundreds of individuals and families offer their time and their homes to be foster caregivers for the AWLA. They help to care for animals recovering from surgeries, for those who are too young for adoption and those who need a break from the shelter environment. Nicole focused her foster attention on shyer adult cats, giving them space to become comfortable and learn to live in a home environment. Since 2018, Parent has fostered nearly 20 animals.

"I really like that I can now make the connection between meeting a new cat, getting to know their personality and providing information and photos to help them get adopted."

When the pandemic reached Alexandria, affecting staffing at the AWLA, Parent stepped up once again, providing additional support to the AWLA's Animal Care team to ensure animals received as much attention as possible during their stay. She later expanded her in-shelter volunteering role, coming in weekly to socialize with

adoptable cats.

She even began taking her "work" back home with her, creating promotional materials, copy editing articles and aiding the AWLA's Development team from her house — often while providing a foster home to even more cats and kittens. Since she began



volunteering, she has donated more than 900 hours of her time to help animals at the AWLA and from home.

In November, Parent began fostering two special kittens, Alex and Texas. Both kittens were found in Alexandria at 3 weeks old, alone and in desperate need of care. When they were brought to the AWLA in need of a foster who could help keep them healthy and teach them socialization while they grew, Parent once again offered her time.

"There are so many different ways that people can contribute to the AWLA's mission," Parent said. "Earlier this year, I had to take a step back from volunteering in-person while I underwent surgeries for breast cancer, but I was able to still help from home. It gave me something to do while I was out of work, and the sense of fulfillment knowing that I'm helping animals in need was the best medicine!"

# **HAPPY TAILS**

Best friends Cookie and Chispin, both hound mixes, quickly became staff and volunteer favorites at the AWLA. The duo spent several months in the home of one of the AWLA's dedicated caregivers while Cookie recovered from surgeries to remove a mammary tumor. In the spring, they returned to the AWLA, ready to meet their new family together.

Finding a home for a bonded pair can often take a bit longer than for individual animals, and when the two are seniors and larger-breed animals, it can be even more challenging. At 10 and 12 years of age, Chispin and Cookie were on the lookout for a very special person to see how wonderful these girls really were.

Kara and Jeff Ryan had recently lost their senior pup, Riley, and told themselves they would wait a while before adopting. But Kara did know that she wanted to give another senior dog a home — and was open to more than one. She saw Cookie and Chispin on the AWLA adoption page and, after seeing (continues on page 7)



(continued from page 6) their fun and lively personalities on video, she knew they just had to meet them. Once she and Jeff did, they knew both pups had found their new family!

It took a few weeks for Cookie and Chispin to warm up in their new home, but Kara saw that they felt safer having each other. Little by little, their goofy personalities and antics began to show. Chispin is like a shadow and can usually be found right next to her favorite people, while Cookie is independent and loves to explore on her own. In the yard, Chispin enjoys chasing squirrels as Cookie finds a sunny spot to snooze. However, both pups are happiest when the whole family is in the room together, showering them with belly rubs.

Kara would encourage everyone to consider a bonded pair and all the benefits of adopting a set of ready-made best friends. They keep each other company while you're away and help each other feel comfortable in new situations. But most of all, with a pair of pets, you get twice the love and affection in one adorable package.



Cookie and Chispin take a moment to snuggle.

## **VOLA LAWSON GIVING SOCIETY**

JANUARY 1 - DECEMBER 31, 2021

The AWLA commends our Vola Lawson Giving Society members for contributions made from January 1 through December 31, 2021. Thank you to the City of Alexandria, which allows us to continue to provide care, control and sheltering services to Alexandria's Animals.

Giving Society members are recognized individuals and businesses who give support at the highest levels. The program includes several levels of recognition for monetary donations and volunteer hours as well as in-kind donations made fiscally. Animal Guardian — \$25,000 or more financial or in-kind support or 5,000 volunteer hours; Animal Champion — \$10,000 or more financial or in-kind support or 1,000 volunteer hours; Animal Friend — \$5,000 or more financial or in-kind support or 500 volunteer hours; Animal Companion — \$2,500 or more financial or in-kind support or 250 volunteer hours; and Animal Advocate — \$1,000 or more in financial support or 100 volunteer hours.

For more information about becoming a member of the Vola Lawson Giving Society, contact development@alexandriaanimals.org.

#### **Friends**

Alexandria Living Magazine Decker Anstrom & Sherron Hiemstra Rueben Bajaj **Banfield Foundation Robert Bisson** Adam Branch

John Brigden & Elizabeth Higdon Brigden Diann Hicks Carlson & James Carlson

Caudron Megary Blackburn Wealth Management Group Thomas & Linda Clark

Vincent Corti Crosspointe Animal Hospital Laurette Crum

Del Ray Animal Hospital **DeSilva Studios** 

Dirty Paw Photography Dog Latin Dog Training

Peter Droubay Richard & Helen Fiske Fort Hunt Animal Hospital Sandy Garlick **Gunston & Dale City Animal Hospitals** 

Tom R. Hodges & Barbara Ann Hodges Hybla Valley Veterinary Clinic

#### **ANIMAL GUARDIANS**

\$25,000+ financial/in-kind donations or 5,000 volunteer hours: J. Coleman Bean & Lois Mahoney Bean. The Anne M. Cabaniss Trust, H.N. (Jay) Hoffman III & Arline Hoffman, Rosemary Hayes Jones & Stan Jones, and the estates of Kaye Brown, Gail Davidson, and Dennis K. Sullivan, along with















#### **ANIMAL CHAMPIONS**

\$10,000+ financial/in-kind donations or 1,000 volunteer hours: Marc Corti, Lisa DiGiulio, Jeremy Earl, Kirk Fedder, Pat & Joseph Gosh, Mary S. Hall, Anne Jones, William Moses, Ann Reid, Maxwell & Erica Scherzer, Beverly Ann Sheridan, Katherine Ward, the Estate of Daniel T. Chapman, along with









Christine & David Mason Joanna McIntosh The Nellis Group The Carol Martha Oelsen Trust Kerin Ord & Martin Parr Pawsh Dog Wash Petco Love Potomac Valley Veterinary Hospital Carol Ramkey Robert & Maureen Rehg Dianne Reseska Michael Rymond The Estate of Charlotte Rynerson Saul Ewing Arnstein & Lehr Diane Spitaliere Town & Country Animal Hospital **Tyler Business Services VCA** Animal Hospitals Jen Walker Team

Mallory Lawhorne

Jeremy Malson

Companions

Christopher Aluotto Beyer Subaru Karen Leigh Blunk Cindy Broome Joe Burbach Carol Bursik Carrie Capuco

Shelley Castle Photography Megan Christensen

Kay Culver Terye Dame Janet D'Angelo Mike Daniels Dona Davis

Jonathan Edwards-Opperman Rose Ellen Farmer

Julie Foster Barbara George Kenneth Goldberg Suzanne & Trey Goulden Susan Hammons Eileen Hanrahan Jeffrey Harris Ruth Heilizer Jodi Horton Linda & Ty Hosler Drew & Anne Kahle Damon Labrie

Alison Lane Photography

Cathee Lee **Edward Lenz** Pete Lundgren Sherri Mahlik **Bonny McMahon** 

Linda Michael & Raymond

Michael Jr. Lesley Morrison Sara Naison-Tarajano Jennifer O'Boyle **Lindy Paull** Sarah Pham Mallery-Jade Pierce Heather Pigman Aaron & Tory Poe

Marti Roper & William Roper Jr.

Erica Rossi Jennifer Salan

Marie Harte Sanchez & Ruben

Sanchez Ilona Savage Melissa Schweitzer **Tactical Land Care** Gergana Siteva Karin Stack Tonia Stocks

The Estate of Donald & Rosemary

Werner

**WOOFS!** Dog Training Center

Cynthia Young Erica Zilioli

Advocates

Reid G. Adler & Jacqueline Arnold **Donald Alexander** 

Janet Allen Jonathan & Anna Altman Kathleen Alvania Jordan Alvey Phyllis Andes Suzanne Arden Marcia Argust Diann Austin Gary Avakian Sarah Ax Mona Badgett Susan Badura **Emily Barnes** Marcus Barnett Vinoda Basnayake

Parthapratim & Kasturi Basu

Rachel Beer Matthew Bennett Anje Berger Dan Bernstein **Bissell Pet Foundation** Arienne Bistany Evon Blunk, Jr. Sandra Bodner Robert Borger Bryan & Marla Bosta Kathleen Bowe **Krystle Bowers** Michelle Branch **Beverly Bronder** Richard Burnam Julia Butters Carolyn R. Campbell Keren Campbell

Elizabeth Cardosi Susan Carter **Duane Chilton** Lisa Chirhart Kate Cinelli Kenneth Cohen Mark Coin

Svlvia Campbell

Mark Colley & Deborah Harsch

Tammy Conforti Julie Conway Mary Cook Cotton & Company LLP Jacqueline Cottrell

James Cottrell Stella Covre Virginia Cox **Duane Crider** Amv Crvtzer **Brian Cummings Brooke Davis** Mark Davis

Michael & Janelle A. Day

Deepika Dayal

**Del Ray Community Partnerships** 

Mary Dent Katie Dobrinska Susan Doherty Colleen Dougherty Don & Cindy Drechsler Kristina Dunphy **Felipe Duran** James Durham

Anna Dvorchik Mitchel Edwards Marla El Alaoui Jennifer Ellett Richard Faircloth

Fairlington Prebyterian Church Karin Fangman & Connie McCabe Anne Farmakidis

Andrew Fehretdinov Flachs Family Fund Harriett Forster

Barbara Francis & Robert Musser

Cara Fratta Andrew Fried Maile Fries Jen Froetschel Yolande Frommer Jonathan Futrell Sharon Gardiner Cheryl Gaskill Michael Germain **Dugald Gillies** 

Laura Giza & Harley Thronson

Natasha Goldvug Linda Greenway Tracy Gregg Gina Hardter Michael Hardy Kathy Harrington Andrea Haslinger Carolyn Healy Lisa Heidemann Sheila Henderson Nishita Henry Jerry & Georgia Hinn **Edward Hovis** Nancy & Steve Howard Dawn Jakutowicz

Jennie Johnson Chris, Kim & Connor Jones

Julianne Jones Mary Jones Inbal Katz Rachel Kazan Julie Keegan John Keyser James Kim Prisca Kim Jeremy Kinsell

Benjamin Klein Laura Laemmle-Weidenfeld Timothy LaMoy

John Langford Kathleen Leach Anthony Lee Alison Leithner Isaac Levey

Diligent Light Maida Loescher Tres Lorton **Adrienne Lucas** Charlotte Luedeke

Janice Magnuson

Laura MacLean & Geoffrey Wolfe MacRae Family Foundation Fund

Fatima Mangera Mary Mann **Carlos Mateos Gary Matz** Chris May Judy McConville Joan McCormack Ferrill Shronda McElveen Amanda McGraw Robert McKinney

Carlos & Sandy Mejias Erin Miceli Jacob Miller Jennifer Moore

The Bob Moran Charitable

Family Fund Jackie Moran **Shane Morrisey Gretchen Moss Daniel Murrin** Suraj Naik

**Nothing Bundt Cakes** Leonard & Marilyn Nowak

Katherine Nucci James & Evelyn Nugent Katherine Hope Oakley **Oldies But Goodies Orling Family Fund** Nicole Parent Lisa Parkinson Janet Peckarsky Miriam Perlberg Barbara Perry Norachai Phisuthikul

**Neil Pinney** Nancy Pisano Jasmina Pozderac Diane Prokop

Candace Quinlan & Walter J.

Quinlan Raimondi & Son, LLC Peter Ramsberger Aimee Rand Loren Reese Kristen Remers John Reseska Kathryn Riley **Barbara Roberts** Nancy Lee Roberts Tyler Robinson Dave Rosenbaum

Salon deZen SAMBA Employees John Sanders

Deidre Schexnayder

Stacy Schlags **Bruce Schroeder Gary Schroen** Carolyn Schroll **Catherine Seay Charles Shepherdson** 

Erin Short Anna Skoug Lana R. Slack Elisabeth Smeda Bill & Joyce Smith Jennifer Smith Patricia Sottile Kenneth Springer Keith Stalder Ann Stat **Elizabeth Storley** 

**Hugh Stuart** 

Susie's Senior Dogs Roland Sweet & Theodora Tilton

Tech Painting Company Inc. Michael Thimblin **Annalou Tirol** Irene Toporovskaya Wendy Tuthill Wayne Van Nostrand Sharon Vannucci Sheila Vaughan Barbara Veloz Patricia Vinall Michael Vitanovec Philip & Amanda Wait Patricia Wangeman Ta-Sha Watkins

Whole Dogz Jeff & Denise Wilburn Stephanie Wiles L. S. Williams Fund

Andrew Wise & Karen Baragona Malgorzata Wright Anna Wyant Sandy Yamamoto Merrill Yee **Eve Young** Jason Zaragoza

Brian Joseph Zwit



Dory, Adopted October 2021 Dirty Paw Photography