



## Letter from the Director

Fairfax County Animal Shelter accepts every animal regardless of species, size, or temperament. We also accept animals with complex medical needs.

In March of 2021, Elsa's owners surrendered her to the shelter because they were no longer able to manage her medical condition. Just as some people have severe allergies, so do animals. Elsa's allergies made her so miserable that she scratched her skin raw and she had open wounds on her neck that made her very uncomfortable.

Because of the generosity of the Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter, we were able to get Elsa to an allergy specialist who prescribed her medication.



Then, we were able to get Elsa into the perfect foster home where she was able to get the care she required to heal.

Elsa's foster mom dressed Elsa in sweaters that protected her delicate skin. Within a few weeks on the new medication and with the sweaters as a barrier, Elsa became a different cat. Elsa's foster mom reported that **"Elsa is such a sweet girl who looks absolutely adorable in her cute outfits that also help to reduce scratching herself due to her allergies. Elsa's two favorite moods are sleepy and zoomie. She loves to nap nearby but also gets excited and will race around. She comes running over for pets before speeding off again for her next adventure!"**

Elsa has been patiently waiting for an adoptive home for the past year. Elsa's allergies will require long-term management, but we know that there is someone out there willing to do this for Elsa. Please consider opening your heart and home to one of our special needs animals like Elsa.

- Reasa D. Currier, Director,  
Fairfax County Department of Animal Sheltering

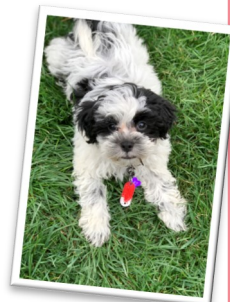
## FOSTER FEATURE: The Flood Family

Sonja Flood has been a foster volunteer with the Fairfax County Animal Shelter (FCAS) for a little under a year but in that time, she and her family have fallen hard for fostering. They've cared for approximately seventeen kittens, one mom cat, a few very adorable young puppies, and they have no intention of stopping soon—"We love fostering!!," said Sonja. We caught up with Sonja to talk about everything foster-related; here are some highlights from the conversation:

### Why do you love fostering?

Animals are such a benefit to our mental health. Snuggling and playing with a kitten brings laughter and joy into our home. It is a mutually beneficial relationship as we are helping them prepare to go to their forever home and they are helping bring joy into our home.

**"There are special animals or people that come into your life for a season and you both have an opportunity to be able to bring joy to each other's lives and when it is time to move on it is okay."**



Photos by S. Flood

### Are there any challenges that you have come across while fostering?

One of the first litters we had was a young, bottle-fed litter. One kitten had swallowing difficulties, which thankfully he grew out of. Another of the kittens was born with Swimmer's Syndrome and some additional complications. (cont'd.)

## animal shelter jargon

### pur·ri·to

[pə'redō]

NOUN

purrito (noun) ·

purritos (plural noun)

A traditional shelter concoction consisting of a soft blanket, towel, or cloth wrapped into a snug cylindrical shape around a tiny kitten.



Tiny, tiny shelter kitten!

## Event Wrap-Up: It's a **Small World**

In our May Newsletter article, "The Question We Have Been Getting Asked a Lot," we addressed whether the Shelter was experiencing an **influx of "Pandemic Pets"** getting surrendered. The short answer was, "no." We mentioned how, "we had an incredibly high number of small animals surrendered, to include rabbits, guinea pigs, and mice." And that, "Eventually, we adopted our way back to a more manageable number—phew!" Well, eventually we found ourselves at a less manageable number again—we and what seemed like every other regional shelter were reporting a high inventory of small animals—and the adoption rate for those small animals was not keeping pace with the rate of intake.



On Sunday, June 26th, we opened the doors to help find new homes for these wonderful pets. We **partnered with the Animal Welfare League of Arlington** to host the **It's A Small World** adoption event, where adoption fees for all small companion animals were waived.

FCAS Small Animal Volunteers were on-hand to help adopters with animal meet n' greets, answer questions, and help with matchmaking. **Pender Veterinary Centre**, who provides exotic veterinary services and care from specially trained exotic veterinarians and technicians, was also available with loads of helpful information for visitors to take home. Rounding out the event crew was **Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Center**, who provided amazing gift bags for the first five adopters.



Within minutes of opening the doors, adopters were planting themselves next to cages and asking to meet adoptable pets. Families who were new to the experience came prepared with questions and were eager to learn about small animal care.

**Sixteen small animals were adopted** at the event and, thanks to the buzz leading up to the event, another fourteen were adopted in the days prior to the event. That is no small feat!

## **FOSTER FEATURE:** The Flood Family (cont'd)

We spent a significant time taping his hips and doing physical therapy to try and build his muscles and have proper walking form. I became so attached to him as I cared for him and cheered on his incremental successes. Unfortunately, due to the severity of his medical complications, he did not survive. It was really hard for me to cope with his loss of life. However, I was so very grateful that he was a part of my life and I [was] a part of his to support him in the time he had. We made it the best experience for him with the time that he had.



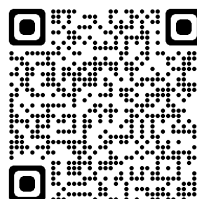
Photo by S. Flood

Originally, when deciding to foster, I was really concerned about my kids and I becoming too attached to the foster and then having to give them up. I learned that this was actually a great life lesson to be able to teach my children that there are special animals or people that come into your life for a season and you both have an opportunity to be able to bring joy to each other's lives and when it is time to move on it is okay. It is understanding what your part is in each other's lives.

### **What would you say to someone who is considering fostering?**

It is the best thing ever! You will have so many funny stories and great experiences. You are providing such a great service to these animals in order to help them grow physically and socializing them to have successful placement. You can choose how to foster, finding what makes sense for your schedule, the time that you have and how the foster [pet] would fit into your family. •

Scan your  
phone's camera  
here to get more  
information!



Want to **become a foster volunteer** like Sonja?

## **UPCOMING HAPPENINGS**

### **CLASSES**

#### ***NO ONE WARNED THE DOG: PREPARING FAMILIES & PETS FOR A NEWBORN BABY***

Sunday, July 24<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m.  
Fairfax County Animal  
Shelter—Training Room

#### ***AN INTRODUCTION TO BACKYARD CHICKEN CARE Presented by Kelly Rutkowski from Adopt a Bird Network***

Sunday, August 14<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m.  
Fairfax County Animal  
Shelter—Training Room

### **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

#### ***Low-Cost Vaccination & Microchip Clinic***

Sunday, August 28<sup>th</sup>  
9 a.m. to 12 p.m.  
Fairfax County Animal Shelter —  
Parking Lot

### **FRIENDS' EVENTS**

#### ***'Don't Judge a Breed By Its Look'***

Saturday, July 16<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. to 6 p.m..  
Mustang Sally Brewing, Chantilly, VA

