Karen Peterson, Garfield's Rescue

Real-Life Heroes

Animal Rescue Volunteers Share How They Keep Fighting the Good Fight

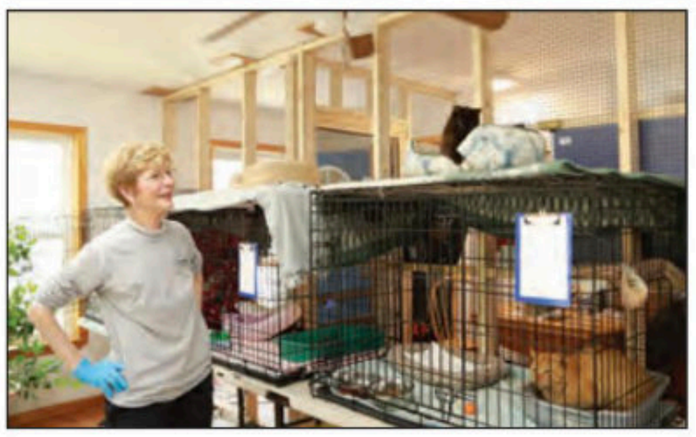
Written by Ann DeMuth
Photographs courtesy of Ann DeMuth, Suzanne Mattingly & Donna McGrath

Whether you are a fan of cats or dogs, or both, there are many ways to support the homeless animals of the Northern Neck through Garfield's Rescue, Inc., Rescue Dog Photography and Northern Neck Partners for Pets.

Garfield's Rescue

Garfield's Rescue, Inc., GRI, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, was established in March of 2020 and has rescued over twelve hundred homeless cats and kittens. Recognizing the absence of resources to adequately foster the large number of homeless cats, GRI's all-volunteer founding members launched an effort to provide critical medical care and necessary vaccination services to make the cats adoptable.

Working with animal control officers in the Northern Neck, GRI receives calls when there are cats/kittens with special needs and when the shelters are full. The organization also takes in injured or stray cats when contacted by members of the community, and rehomes cats when their owners can no longer care for them. Garfield's Rescue provides foster care for over 100 cats and kittens in their network of private



foster homes. They also collaborate with other rescue organizations and caring community residents to provide compassionate care at multiple community cat colonies with daily food, fresh water, shelter, and needed medical attention.

From January to September of 2022, GRI spent over $77,000 on veterinarian expenses and care for foster cats. Their 2022 "Wine & Whiskers" fundraising event held at Triple V Farms was a great success and raised $8,500. Donations are still very much needed to help care for the homeless cat population in the Northern Neck. Ann Bedford commented, "We are making a difference on the Northern Neck, one cat at a time."

This year's annual "Wine & Whiskers" event is slated for September 2023.

"Girl with a Pearl Earring" (Cindy Lou)

Rescue Dog Photography

Rescue Dog Photography supports shelter and rescue dogs, and non-profit rescues in the Northern Neck and beyond. Along with

providing free photoshoots to non-profit rescues in the hopes that a memorable photo will help a dog find their forever home, RDP offers non-profit rescues low to no-cost website design and graphic design services. They also host fundraisers for non-profit rescues.

"The Great Wave" (Max)

Rescue Dog Photography is a branch of A.D.design. Proprietor and photographer Ann DeMuth likes to take pictures where viewers can get a glimpse of the dog's personality. She explains, "When I get back to my studio after a photoshoot to look through the pictures, and see a really good shot, it's incredibly rewarding. Rescue dogs tell you so much in such a short time, sharing their personality and how unique they are. When I look at a picture and can see a window into their soul, it's an amazing feeling. I feel like they've given me a chance to take that one shot that's going to speak to that special someone."

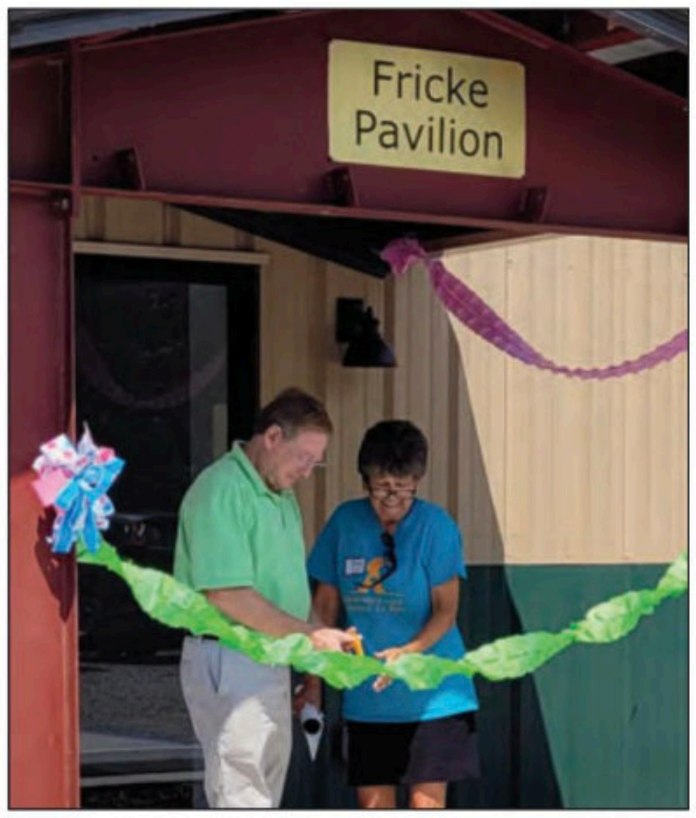
Photos and bios of the adoptable dogs are shared on the websites and Facebook pages of both Rescue Dog Photography and Friends of the Northumberland County Animal Shelter.

Northern Neck Partners for Pets

Northern Neck Partners for Pets is well on its way to being a safe haven for cats and dogs in the community. Funds are still being raised to build the main state-of-the-art shelter, but a pavilion has already been built on NNPP's 35.8 acre property (790 Devil's Bottom Road, Lancaster) thanks to a gift from the Garfield and Andrea Fricke estate. The pavilion will host NNPP's future events and has already seen great use by the Northern Neck Kennel Club for specialty classes, ranging from obedience to agility.

The main shelter will be built on a secluded plateau, surrounded by woods and fields. It will be able to house 27 dogs and 32 cats. Terrie Dort, founder of the 501(c)(3) non-profit NNPP, added, "Of course, part of the success of any shelter is moving the animals in and out, through other rescue groups, adoptions, and fosters. So, we will be saving and helping many, many animals as time goes on." The new shelter will also provide room when the local county shelters are full. Terrie Dort shared, "Our vision is a shelter that will serve as a safe haven for all of the many neglected, abandoned, and homeless dogs and cats that we have in this area. Our goal is to take in these animals and work to get them vetted and rehabilitated so they can get to rescues or permanent homes or even remain with us if that is the result. We intend to work with all of the shelters on the Northern Neck and through our mutual efforts, we have a vision for all of the county shelters of the Northern Neck to achieve 'no kill' status."

NNPP is launching a capital campaign to raise the needed funds for the shelter in a 2-year time frame. Terrie reported, "A very early gift from Randy Hudson really helped get us launched, and then we were blessed by the purchase of the land by Vicki Kinsel. Those donations, along with major support from the Animal Welfare League, and support from some other major donors, have gotten us to the point where we are today. Now we will be going out into the community and searching for those major donors who will help us make this dream come true."



Eric Nost and Terrie Dort celebrate the opening of the Fricke Pavilion.

Sandy Saxer, Northern Neck Kennel Club instructor of Agility for Fun.

There are many ways to help or donate to all three of these incredibly special organizations. Learn more:

Garfield's Rescue, Inc.
www.garfieldsrescue.org

Rescue Dog Photography
www.rescuedogphotography.com

Northern Neck Partners For Pets
northernneckpartnersforpets.org