

PAW Shakes



Partnership for Animal Welfare Newsletter ▪ Fall 2026
PO Box 1074, Greenbelt, MD 20768 ▪ www.paw-rescue.org

Every “Yes” Changes a Life

BY ASHLEY FIELDS

TICK. TICK. TICK. The clock never stops. Every day, animal shelters face impossible decisions. As more animals arrive and space grows tighter, time becomes the one thing no one can create. Tiny kittens who are critically ill, seriously injured, or simply too young to survive another night in the shelter are placed on urgent rescue lists. Each comes with a deadline. Not because they aren’t wanted. Because they can’t wait.

For PAW, every rescue begins with a race against the clock. When an urgent rescue plea comes, there is no time to think about tomorrow. We rush to make it through the shelter doors before they close, knowing that if we can’t say “yes” today, tomorrow may be too late.

At PAW, “medical need” doesn’t mean “too much.” It means a life worth fighting for. Some of our most unforgettable success stories began with kittens whose futures seemed uncertain. Blossom taught us that cerebellar hypoplasia doesn’t define a life. Jo proved that losing an eye doesn’t mean losing the chance to be loved. Rasputin survived panleukopenia against incredible odds. Anastasia overcame a broken hip and pelvis through surgery, patience, and months of healing. This year, three more tiny fighters have joined that list:



ARYA’S journey began with another heartbreaking decision. At 4 weeks, Arya came to PAW with a broken right hind leg. Following veterinary consultation, the decision of amputation was the only way to give her the pain-free future she deserved. The amputation will wait until she is bigger. Until then, her foster is spoiling her.

ODIN arrived at PAW at 6 weeks old with a ruptured left eye. His injury was so severe that he required emergency surgery called an *enucleation*. After his surgery, Odin started to be a happy kitten and show his sweet and loving personality, adapting almost immediately to a “monocular” life. Today, he spends his days chasing toys, wrestling with his



foster siblings, and reminding everyone that one eye is more than enough to see a bright future.

PERCY’S story reminds us that healing is rarely measured by dramatic moments. More often, it’s measured in countless



small acts of love. PAW responded to a rescue plea for little 4 week old Percy who was found as a stray with his eyes crusted shut and covered in dirt, feces, and urine. What first appeared to be a severe eye infection quickly became a neurological emergency. Percy was too weak to stand and had tremors, leaving him unable to walk. He was hospitalized and received critical supportive care before starting treatment for suspected toxoplasmosis.

When Percy entered foster care, he couldn't do the things every kitten should be able to do. His foster spoon-fed him every meal because he couldn't eat on his own. She bathed him, changed his diaper, and gave him medication multiple times

a day. Around the clock, she became his nurse, his physical therapist, and his biggest cheerleader. Then, little by little, Percy began to fight his way back. First, he ate on his own. Then he discovered toys again. Eventually, he made his way to the litter box without help. Each tiny milestone represented hours of dedication and weeks of patient care.

Today, Percy is stronger, brighter, and determined. But he still has a long road ahead. He continues working to regain the strength, stability, and coordination needed to walk confidently again. Every day brings another small victory, another reason to believe, and another reminder that some lives simply need more time.

These stories all began the same way. With a clock ticking. And someone willing to answer the call.

Medical rescue is expensive. It is exhausting. It is unpredictable. But it is also where miracles begin.

Because of your support, PAW doesn't have to see a timestamp. We see potential. We see resilience. We see the kitten hiding beneath the diagnosis. The next urgent call will come. Another shelter will need help. Another tiny life will be waiting for someone to race against the clock. When that moment comes, your generosity allows us to answer with the one word that changes everything: **Yes!** 🐾

Lady Stanley: Our Soul Dog

BY ROM MASCETTI

NEARLY EIGHT YEARS AGO, we met a one-year-old rescue at the White Flint Plaza PetSmart in Bethesda, Maryland. She was being cared for by a wonderful foster family, and from the start, it was obvious she was special. Fun-loving, energetic, and endlessly motivated by food, toys, and kisses, she carried herself with a joyful spirit. After one visit, we knew we wanted to adopt her and, after much deliberation, we named her Lady Stanley (after the Stanley Cup and our household's love for the Washington Capitals).

What we did not realize then was how profoundly she would change our lives.

PAW brought Stanley to our home the week before Thanksgiving. She arrived happy, but understandably unsure. She could rest, but she wasn't fully at ease. In those early weeks, we saw glimpses of comfort mixed with caution. She was adjusting, learning about our routines, our voices, and the sounds of a new



First Christmas



Blanket Queen



Christmas Morning With Her Cousin

home/neighborhood. That first month required patience, reassurance, and, admittedly, a steady supply of treats. Stanley taught us that trust cannot be rushed. It is earned through consistency, gentleness, and time.

Then one evening, everything shifted. My wife and I were sitting on the family room floor when Stanley rose from her bed, walked between my wife's legs, curled herself into a tight ball, and rested her heavy head on her thigh. In that unprompted moment of vulnerability, we felt it: she had chosen us. From then on, we knew she was our soul dog.

Over the past eight years, Stanley has been more than a companion. She has been an ambassador. As a pitbull, she has consistently debunked misconceptions about bully breeds. Anyone who meets her encounters a dog who loves everyone and everything she comes in contact with. She has won over friends, neighbors, and especially our six nieces and nephews, so much so that their parents now regularly field the question, "Can we get a dog like Stanley?"

We have been fortunate that her health has brought only minor challenges, and we don't take that for granted. Many families face much harder roads. That awareness has deepened our gratitude for every healthy year, every long walk, every tail wag at the door. Most importantly, Stanley has reshaped our daily lives. She gives us a reason to be active. She pulls us outside when it

would be easier to stay in. She demands our presence, whether on a walk, during a game of fetch or tug-of-war, or in a quiet moment on the couch. She reminds us, without fail, that joy can be simple and that love can be unconditional.

As Stanley turns nine this year, we are acutely aware of how lucky we are. Rescue dogs do not just find homes; they change them. Stanley has enriched our lives in ways that are difficult to fully articulate. She has taught us patience, empathy, and gratitude. She has shown us how powerful trust can be once it is given.

We are endlessly thankful to PAW for bringing her into our lives. And every day, we are reminded to cherish the time we have with our soul dog because life is short, and the love of a rescue dog is one of its greatest gifts. ❤️



WOOFIE'S FUND Continues!

IN MEMORY of his beloved cockapoo, Woofie, Michael Weiss continues to generously support PAW in his name. We thank Michael for helping us save the lives of more companion animals than we could have otherwise. The PAW kitties and pups send Michael and Woofie their love, and the PAW humans send their gratitude.



Michael and Woofie

Do You Have a Story to Share?

We would love to hear it! Have an idea but not sure how to put it together? Need more information? Contact us at paw-shakes-editor@paw-rescue.org.

We want to hear stories of how your PAW rescue pet impacted your life—the challenges, joys, even the heartbreak. We'd also love to hear your experiences of adopting, volunteering, or fostering with PAW.



Fosters Return for a Visit

BY BOB KLEIN

This is a brief story of how one very dedicated and generous PAW foster chose to keep in touch with the dogs to whom he had grown so close.

WHEN ONE OF MY FOSTER DOGS is adopted, it is a bittersweet event. I'm always shaken to be at the end of my quest to get one of them adopted. I am so happy that Star has found a great home, but I'm going to miss her. Bobo and I learned so much together; is he going to be okay without me? At the right moment during the adoption exchange, the words came out of my mouth: "If you need someone to watch Pepper when you go on vacation, let us know. We would love to have her back for a little while." So how does this pet sitting offer work out?

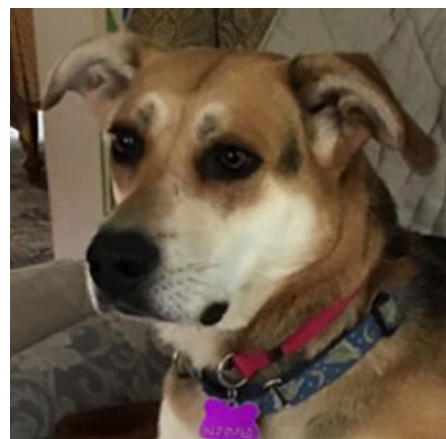
It is good for both the adopters and the dog to come to my home. The adopters don't worry about Sky while they are away. Star doesn't have to go into a kennel; she'll be in a home that she knows, with dogs that she remembers. Bobo thinks he's going to doggie camp for a week.

I love to reconnect with my foster pups with all of their quirks. I was all teary when Star left, and now I get to snuggle



Bobo was a three-legged Coon Hound. Because of our familiarity with his disability we were the perfect dog sitters.

her again. I have to safeguard the house for Pepper the escape artist, and get out the area rugs for Bobo who doesn't do slippery floors. I'll need to batten down the hatches for Sky who will get into anything he can. It can be a lot of work, but I still look forward to their coming. I'm anxious to see my friend again and I always get a brilliant greeting. It is fun to see how the dogs have changed from being in a new home, and to see the same dog that I loved in the first place.



Sky was just back for a camp visit recently and he is the same food warrior as when we fostered him. His adopters are saints.

As everyone who has fostered knows, it makes all the difference for a dog (or cat) to be in a home. For my vacation fosters, all the pet knows is the family is going somewhere and leaving them behind. But since they stay in a place that is familiar, they remember the people and the Klein dogs. The former fosters seem to fall right into the household routine that they were part of before they were adopted. And they always seem to enjoy their time back with old friends, and running with the pack.

When people deliver their dog for us to watch for the first time, they always ask what it will cost or how they can pay us. The answer is that we can't take money for the pleasure of spending a week with Pepper. But if they feel it necessary to exchange some money for Bobo's visit, I tell them they can give a donation to PAW if they like - and they always do. They are very generous.

Fostering is a journey that we have been on for over 30 years that has given us great joy. It is always a pleasure to see one of our foster dogs launched into their new life, and vacation fostering is a wonderful chance to revisit our time together. 🐾



Big Star was tired of being in the kennel. She was acting up and being awful at the adoption shows. She was adopted by a first-grade teacher (patience personified). When Star came to camp, she was a nicer dog than when she was adopted.



Pepper was an escape artist as a foster. When she came to camp it was with her Chihuahua running mate Ruby. They were so much fun together.

Stripe's Heartworm Journey

BY MARTHA OPPENHEIM

IN MARCH 2026 STRIPE came to PAW from a South Carolina shelter with his records showing a negative heartworm result. Unfortunately, during his routine new dog exam, we learned Stripe was actually heartworm positive. Since it can take about 6 months for the worms to be detectable, he was likely infected just prior to his first test.

Our vet advised proceeding with the standard three-injection protocol which involves a month of antibiotics, 60 days of rest, a first injection, 30 more days of rest, two more injections, then 8 weeks of limited activity. The process lasts about 5 months and requires strict exercise restriction. Stripe could only be walked for bathroom breaks and had to be kept calm indoors. Running, jumping, roughhousing, or any activity that raised his heart rate could hurt his heart and prevent full recovery. Not only is the treatment expensive, it is incredibly hard to keep a young dog calm for months.

PAW faced the daunting task of how to help Stripe through this ordeal. As an active young cattle dog, keeping him calm in a kennel environment did not seem feasible. Thankfully, a relatively new volunteer responded to our request to foster Stripe in his time of need. In the

following article, Theresa Miles recounts her journey helping save Stripe. PAW cannot say THANK YOU enough to Theresa. Stripe is now fully recovered and looking for a new foster or, even better, a new forever home. 🐾

PROTECT THEIR HEART. PROTECT THEIR LIFE.

The Importance of Heartworm Prevention

- HEARTWORM DISEASE IS SERIOUS**
Heartworms are parasites spread by mosquito bites. They can cause severe damage to your pet's heart, lungs, and other organs—and can be fatal.
- PREVENTION IS EASY & SAFE**
Monthly heartworm medication is a safe, simple way to protect your pet. It's far easier (and less costly) than treatment.
- COSTS LESS THAN TREATMENT**
Preventing heartworms costs far less than treating the disease—and spares your pet unnecessary pain and suffering.
- PROTECT THEM YEAR-ROUND**
Mosquitoes can be active most of the year. Monthly protection keeps your pet safe no matter the season.

A monthly dose of protection shows a lifetime of love.

Why Check and Update Your Pet's Microchip?

As pet parents, we know how much our furry friends mean to us. Unfortunately pets can sometimes go missing. According to the American Humane Society, about 10 million pets are lost every year in the U.S. alone. A microchip can help bring them home safely—but only if your contact information is up-to-date.

Microchips are a powerful tool in pet identification. They're small and permanent, unlike collars or tags. Microchips contain a unique ID number that links to a pet owner's contact information in a national registry. When a vet or animal shelter scans the chip, they retrieve your info to contact you. But if the information is outdated, the chip is useless.

That's why regularly checking and updating your pet's microchip details is an essential step in ensuring they're always safe.



Not sure which registry your chip is with?

Use the Pet Microchip Lookup Tool to check:

www.petmicrochiplookup.org/or scan the QR code.



SAVE THIS LIFE Microchips No Longer Working:

Thankfully, the solution is easy, just register your pet with another microchip company

Why I Started Fostering

BY THERESA MILES

FOR MOST OF MY ADULT LIFE, I have had two dogs. After losing my last senior dog in 2025, I wasn't ready to adopt again. If you've lost a dog, you know how quiet the house gets. The routines disappear. No walks. No one waiting for breakfast. No one reminding you it's time to go outside. But I am currently unemployed, and it doesn't feel responsible to take on the long-term cost of another dog. So I was stuck: I wanted a dog around, but I wasn't ready to adopt.

That's how I ended up fostering. For the first time in decades I had an empty house and a real chance to help.

My current PAW foster is a heartworm-positive cattle dog named Stripe. He's a Velcro dog who wants to know where I am all the time. He barks when he thinks I'm ignoring him. Even on heartworm treatment, with enough medication to slow down most dogs, he still has energy to spare. There are days when he is frankly a pain in the ass. There are also days when he is a great dog. He's smart, loyal, and wonderful on walks. More importantly, he needs



someone home during treatment, and right now I can be that person.

Fostering has made one thing clear: a dog can be wonderful and still not be the right dog for you. My foster and

I are not a forever match. He needs a very active home, probably with some land, and someone who really loves the intensity that comes with a cattle dog. He deserves a home that fits him. And I'm okay with that. Before fostering, I worried about how hard it would be to let a dog go. What I've learned is that I can care about a dog without needing to keep him. I can be attached and still know someone else may have the better forever home.

And that's what fostering is, really: a bridge. Sometimes a dog needs a safe place to land while recovering from a medical condition. Sometimes they need time, structure, training, or just a chance to decompress before finding their forever family. Being part of that has meant more to me than I expected. I still plan to adopt again when the time is right. But I think I'll keep fostering even then. I've spent most of my life with two dogs, and that still feels right. For now, I'm glad to play a temporary role in helping one very energetic cattle dog get ready for whatever comes next. 🐾

Membership/Donation Form for Partnership for Animal Welfare, Inc.

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scan to donate

PLEASE CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY:

☐ MEMBERSHIP:

☐ Single (\$25) ☐ Family (\$45) ☐ Renewal (Please check here if this is a renewal membership.)

☐ Additional donation: I am enclosing an additional gift of \$ _____.

☐ I enclose an additional donation in memory of:

A person: _____ A pet: _____

☐ I enclose an additional donation in honor of:

A person: _____ A pet: _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

☐ Volunteer: I am willing to help in the following capacity: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Please make your tax-deductible checks payable to Partnership for Animal Welfare and mail to:
P.O. Box 1074, Greenbelt, Maryland 20768. *The Animals Thank You!*

To access a detailed form or donate online, visit: paw-rescue.org/donations

The Partnership for Animal Welfare is an officially recognized non-profit organization which is funded through donations and adoption fees. Donations are tax-deductible (Tax ID # 52-1979581)



Donations in Honor of and in Memory of...

In honor of people:

In honor of our veterinarian
Dr. Barbara Henderson,
by Nancey Parker
Happy Birthday to Barbara
Freedman, by Barbara Morrell

In memory of people:

In memory of Susan Cady
Johnson, by Dawn Conley
In memory of Susan Cady
Johnson, by Lizabeth
Montgomery
In memory of Susan Cady
Johnson, by Lois Sharps
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In memory of Susan Cady
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In memory of Susan Cady
Johnson, by Kathleen and
Robert Grudberg
In memory of Susan Cady
Johnson, by Janice Amburn
In memory of my cousin Sue
Cady, by Jeanne Koennel
In memory of Robert Massicot,
by Jennifer Sable
In memory of Robert Eugene
Massicot (From: Brenda and
Bob), by Robert Hargett
In memory of Robert Massicot,
by Cynthia Silverblatt
In memory of my father, Robert
Massicot, by Shelly Rose
In memory of Mr. Robert
Massicot, by Lisa Glick

In memory of Terry Werling,
by Elaine Keys
In memory of G. Esther Pollack
and Betty Lightner, by Kenneth
Lightner and Ilene Pollack
In memory of Maggie Lee,
by Paul Lee
In memory of Wayne Humphries,
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In memory of Wayne Humphries,
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In memory of Wayne Humphries,
by Jeanette Cuzzolino
In memory of Wayne Humphries,
by Carol Quinn
In memory of Wayne Humphries,
by Danielle Furr
In memory of Wayne Humphries,
by Robin Fraser

In honor of pets:

In honor of PAW dog Izzy who
was adopted by Dan Binebrink
in 2022, by Bob and Nancy Klein
In honor of "Penny" Perkins
("Peggy Sue" when we adopted
her), by Amanda Perkins
In honor of Bandit's "gotcha day"
on 4/4/2020, by Allison
Primack
In honor of Percy the kitten,
by Barbara Freedman Haurand
In honor of Percy the kitten,
by Michael Weiss
In honor of Percy the kitten,
by Ginnie Maurer
In honor of Junie, by Matthew
and Joanna Haley
In honor of Spunkie, Jami, Ms.
Fish, Malik, and Caleb from
Aisha, Atiya, Rudy Smith, and
Gail Shepherd-Smith
In honor of Oliver, by Ronald
and Eileen Parlow
In honor of my two cats, Lexi and
Peanut, by Jeri Holloway

In honor of Camelia and Daisy
(beagles), by Lenora Fuller-
McCall
In honor of Diva, by Bernadette
Bailey

In memory of pets:

In memory of Mikki Williams,
by Deborah Boettcher
In memory of Crystal and Radar,
by Bob Speakman
In memory of Luke aka "Man
Cat" and Zoe the Toe, by
Skye Chacon
In memory of Rocky, by Liz
Symonds
In memory of Lucy Rice
Mitchell, our much-loved PAW
dog (adopted July 2014, passed
away May 2026), by Caitlin
Mitchell
In memory of "Lucy Mitchell" who
came to her family from PAW,
by Francis and Michelle Rice
In memory of Luna, a greyhound
rescue, by Harriet Freedman
In memory of Kringle, Woody,
Nipper, Boo-Boo, Alex, and
Roxie—all great dogs!,

by Mary Scott and Cindy Todd
In memory of Kit-Cat, by Susan
Middleswarth
In memory of my beloved Bella
who lived to be 20 yrs old,
by Katrina Boverman
In memory of PAW cat Gummy
Bear, by Emily Ratner and
Michael Lumpkin
In memory of Amy Bleich's
beloved Kylie, by Linda
Coleman
In memory of dear Kylie, Amy
Bleich family's beloved dog,
by Katrina Boverman
In memory of the Bleich-Simpson
family's smart, loving and fun-
loving dog, Kylie, by Wendy
Hall

In memory or honor of people and pets:

In memory of Susanne Mattingly
and Zeke, our adoptee,
by Shigeko and Dennis
Cunningham

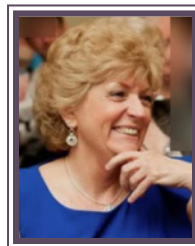
Make a Lasting Impact

By making a gift to PAW through your will, trust, or other financial plan, you can help now and in the future knowing that you're providing for the charities that matter most to you.

There are many ways to plan for the future such as bequests, gifts of life insurance (making PAW the beneficiary of an insurance policy), gifts of IRA mandatory distributions, and many more.

Please consult your financial planner for your best options. And thank you for considering PAW, and helping to take care of the animals of tomorrow.

In loving memory of *Sue*



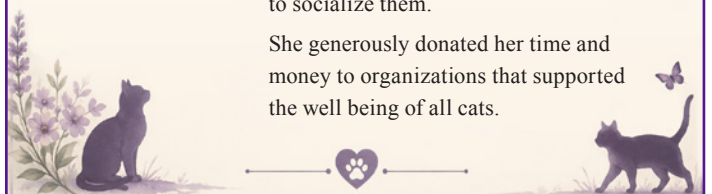
SUE JOHNSON LIVED LIFE TO ITS FULLEST and loved the people and feline friends she shared it with.

She doted on her indoor cats as well as the feral cats that lived like royalty in the shed behind her house.

She participated in catching the felines and seeing that they were spay/nutured and returned to their "fit for a king" shed.

She was successful in finding a home for one of the feral kittens born in her shed after bringing three kittens into her home to socialize them.

She generously donated her time and money to organizations that supported the well being of all cats.





Partnership for Animal Welfare
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PAW Shakes to. . .

- PAW's ADOPTION SHOW HELPERS for sacrificing many hours throughout the week to help keep our group going.
- PAW's KENNEL BUDDIES, who exercise and socialize our kennel dogs all week.
- TRANSPORTERS, who take our cats and dogs to and from their vet appointments. They are so grateful.
- PAW's FOSTER and ADOPTIVE FAMILIES—we couldn't save lives without you.
- VETERINARIANS AND STAFF at College Park Animal Hospital; Animal Eye Care Center, Gaithersburg; Paradise Animal Hospital, Catonsville, MD; Caring Hands Animal Hospital, Rockville; Spay Now Animal Surgery Clinic, Columbia; Bowie Spay and Neuter; Dr. Hannah Levy at Cozy Cats—A Cat Practice; Veterinary Referral Associates (VRA); Veterinary Emergency Group (VEG), Georgetown, DC, Pikesville and Columbia; Dr. Laura Mitterman and the staff of Dogs and Cats Emergency and Specialty Hospital, Bowie; Dr. Abbie Speas and the staff at BluePearl Pet Hospital, Rockville; Skylos Sports Medicine, Woodstock; Olney-Sandy Spring Veterinary Hospital, Olney; Animal Birth Control, Millersville; Life Companions Veterinary Hospital, Bowie; Livewell Animal Hospital, The Park, DC; and Hickory Ridge Animal Hospital, Columbia.
- TRAINERS Robin Shepherd, Infinite-Dog, and Tara Murtagh, Complex Companions Training & Behavior Services for their generosity, help, and training advice for our more challenging dogs; and GROOMER Cynthia Champion, Champion Dog Grooming.
- PUP SCOUTS in Rockville, MD, owner Henry Towberman, and RIVERMIST PET LODGE in Brinklow, MD.
- BEST FRIENDS PET CARE in Gaithersburg, manager Vanessa Hidalgo.
- YOGA HEIGHTS, Georgia Ave NW, Washington, DC for partnering with us for Kitten Yoga.
- YOUR DOG'S FRIEND for offering free workshops, training referrals, and more.
- LAST BUT NEVER LEAST, Maryland area PETSMART and PETCO stores and THE BIG BAD WOOF, DC for hosting our dog and cat adoption shows.

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