



ANIMAL ADVOCATES

AUTUMN 2019 APPEAL

ANIMAL ADVOCATES, INC.

Location:

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Pittsburgh, PA 15220

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@weareanimaladvocates

Animal Advocates is a nonprofit,
tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization.

THRIFT SHOP

Phone:

(412) 928-9837

CURRENT SHOP HOURS

Monday – 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM
Tuesday, Wednesday, & Friday –
Noon to 3:00 PM
Thursday – 10:30 AM to 4:00 PM
Saturday – 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Closed Sunday

Giving thanks

by Patricia Murphy

"If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough."

--Meister Eckhart

Animal Advocates is staffed and run entirely by volunteers--we have no paid positions, so our volunteers are literally our life's blood.

Our shop in the West End is a long-standing hallmark of our organization. The shop not only raises funds; it also raises awareness of our mission and our unique qualities. Visitors to our shop will meet the dedicated and creative shop volunteers who keep the shop looking beautiful, make our guests feel welcome, and attend to all the necessary housekeeping (i.e. pricing inventory, arranging displays, sorting through and pricing donated items, etc.). **We thank our shop volunteers.**

Our in-house rescued cats, known as the AdvoCats, are in residence at our headquarters, awaiting adoption. While they wait, they need to be cared for every day, with at least twice-daily visits, 365 days a year (366 in leap years). They need food, water, clean litter boxes, a clean, healthy environment, grooming, sometimes medication. Equally important is the loving, cuddling, petting, and playing that our committed and hard-working cat caregivers and cuddlers provide. That time and TLC is what readies the AdvoCats for forever homes. **We thank our cat caregivers and cuddlers.**

Rescued animals who aren't at our headquarters, which would be some cats and kittens and all of our dogs and puppies, are cared for in volunteer foster homes. Fostering can conjure Forrest Gump's mother's famous quote: "... life was like a box of chocolates. You never know what you're gonna get..." We make every attempt to be sure a dog or cat going to a foster home is good with other pets and children, depending on the configuration of the foster family. We don't place 65-pound "wannabe lap dogs" with tiny senior citizen ladies, or fragile, frightened kittens in busy, hectic households with multiple young children.

Still, we never know exactly what we're going to get. A cat who is reticent and low key in a noisy shelter can come out of his shell in the safety of a foster home. He might decide he's the boss of the resident cats and strut around singing "I just can't wait to be king." A dog who is frightened and cowering out on the streets gets a boost of confidence in her foster home and becomes a happy, playful whirling dervish. Our foster caregivers have to be prepared for some surprises and ready to roll with the punches. **We thank**

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Adopted dogs who have jobs

We know that dogs love to have a job to do, especially when the job keeps them close to the people they love. Here are several dogs recently adopted from Animal Advocates who now have not only loving families and homes, but important jobs to do.

Gigi, the most charming chihuahua imaginable, was the victim of a family breakup and divorce. Her new people,



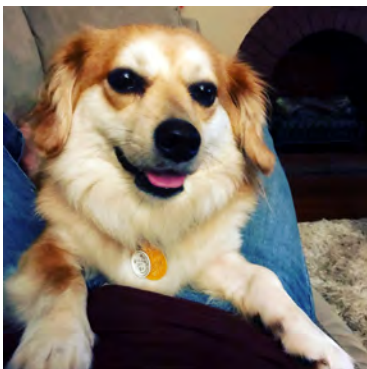
Barb and Drew, can't understand why her previous people weren't fighting for custody of her. They feel blessed to have her, and if Gigi could talk, we know she'd say the same thing about Barb and Drew. Gigi is a certified emotional support dog for Drew, a retired officer and fine gentleman. She is his constant loving companion.

Nala was literally on the table waiting for the "blue liquid" and the injection that would end her life. She looked into the vet's eyes with her honest, good dog expression and offered her a paw in friendship. Nala saved herself! We pulled her to rescue.

Thanks to her adoptive family, the Hrabars, she is now embarking (no pun intended) on a career as a therapy dog where she will pass along the calm, gentle, accepting attitude that is second nature to her. Nala aced her early obedience classes, quickly earned her Canine Good Citizen certification, and excelled in Therapy Dog classes.



She received her TDI (Therapy Dog International) certification in January. Her family, her trainers, and everybody who meets Nala loves her.



And then there is **Atlas**, a dachshund-pomeranian blend. They must have had Atlas in mind when they coined the phrase "bright eyed and bushy tailed." His adopter, Bobbi, is a campus minister at Bellefield Presbyterian in Oakland. Atlas can accompany his person to work. Always happy, always friendly, always attentive and welcoming,

Atlas will be a great stress reliever, and a reminder of pets waiting at home, for students and staff alike.

Giving thanks

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our foster caregivers.

Another form of fostering is hospice care. These stalwart and loving people take in animals with special needs, the very aged, the terminally ill. Like Pebble, a small, elderly cat who had been abandoned in an apartment. She was in very poor condition when she came to us, suffering not just the effects of her abandonment but some underlying senior cat medical problems. Her foster family gave Pebble what might have been the best care of her life at the end of her life. To do this kind of caregiving, you need a big heart and the bravery to have it broken. **We thank our hospice caregivers.**

We thank volunteers who work on many and varied duties essential to making Advocates function. Volunteers who arrange vet care, make vet runs, and maintain medical records. Volunteers who track our finances and handle our correspondence. Volunteers who answer emails and phone calls. Volunteers who plan events and work the tables at these events.

The help, support and generosity of local animal businesses is much appreciated as well. **We thank The Dog Stop South Hills, PetValu in Greentree, Grooming Tailz, Cooper's Cutz, PawSpa, Bethel Park Animal Clinic, and Banfield Pet Hospital in Crafton.**

And we couldn't exist without generous gifts and moral support. For these, **we thank our donors and friends.**

Finally, **we thank the animals whom we have been privileged to care for and help on their journeys.** We see a cat who had little reason to trust humans transformed, being held in the arms of his adoptive dad. We see a dog who had been too frightened to move, prancing out the door with her new family, head high, tail wagging and never looking back. That's all the thanks we need.

Including a bequest to Animal Advocates as part of your estate planning is a beautiful way to express your love for animals and leave behind a legacy that provides rehabilitation and a second chance for countless pets in need.

Some ways to do this would be to name Animal Advocates as the recipient of a direct gift, or as the beneficiary of an insurance policy, bank account, and/or retirement account. If you have such assets you would like to designate to help with our rescue efforts, please contact us and we will be happy to assist you in determining the appropriate steps to take.

New signage on the Wabash Street storefront now greets visitors to Animal Advocates' Resale Shop. A flag, a sidewalk chalkboard, and a bright electronic sign in the front window announce when the shop is open.

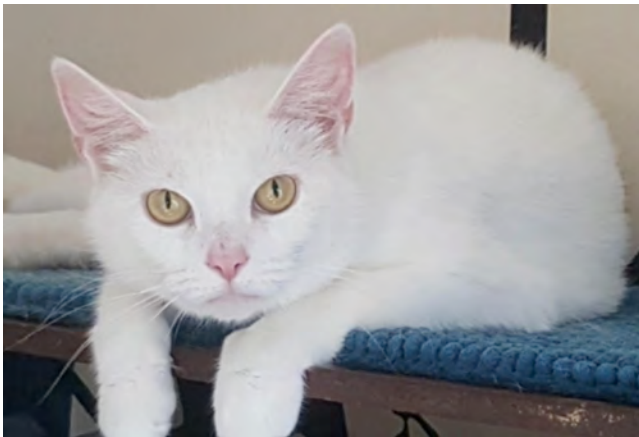
Our sign painter, Gregg Puchalski, recently retired from a 25-year career as a scenic artist in film and TV production. He is known for painting a giant sports mural on the side of a tall building that formerly stood at Fifth and Wood Streets Downtown and for creating a billboard tribute to Andy Warhol.

Gregg and his wife live in Regent Square with one dog and six cats—all rescued. They share a backyard with the wildlife of Frick Park.

No one can miss us now!



Rescued, adopted, lost, found, and readopted: the story of Crackers



Crackers is one lucky cat! She is just our latest poster child illustrating the value of microchipping pets; other lost dogs and cats originally rescued by Animal Advocates have also been returned quickly to their families, or to safety at Advocates for readoption, because of this unobtrusive permanent form of identification. Every pet adopted from Animal Advocates is microchipped.

Back in 2015, Animal Advocates rescued a tiny kitten named Mad Max—that monicker became Maxine when we learned that “he” was actually a “she.” Maxine was adopted into a home in a small town near Pittsburgh. Fast forward to 2019, when a call came to notify us that a white cat equipped with one of our microchips had been captured after living in an abandoned house for about eighteen months. A kind neighbor had spotted her crawling in and out of the house through a broken window. She began feeding the cat and coaxing her close enough to be petted and eventually crated for a trip to a vet’s office, where a scan revealed the microchip number registered to Animal Advocates.

The cat was Maxine, now named Crackers. She had escaped shortly after her adoptive family moved, and they had not had any success locating her. Since the family had acquired other pets after Crackers went missing, they gave permission for Advocates to place her with a new adopter. After a short stay in our cat residence, Crackers recently was readopted into what should finally be her forever home.

Follow Animal Advocates on social media

Keep up on the cats and dogs, volunteer opportunities, and exciting happenings at the Thrift Shop!

Adopters and volunteers: Tag photos of your “alumni” cats, dogs, and volunteering experiences with the hashtag #animaladvocatespgh to share them with our fans and followers.

FIP: a heartbreaking cat disease

by Kimberly Francis

Off the street and safely ensconced at Animal Advocates, Momma Sonia could relax and focus on nursing her one-month old kittens. All but Zach, the runt of the litter, thrived. At 8 weeks old, Zach weighed barely more than a pound, and although old enough to eat solid food, he showed little interest.

Some TLC and KMR were in order, so Zach came home with me and reluctantly submitted to cuddles and syringe feedings of kitten formula. He readily joined my cat family, was accepted by all, and was soon eating, playing, and napping with the big boys.

I was confident this failure-to-thrive kitten was over whatever ailed him, but a vet check indicated otherwise. Little Zach was diagnosed with Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP), a fatal disease caused by the immune system's inability to properly and protectively respond to a coronavirus infection.

The virus, Feline Enteric Coronavirus (FCoV), is common and triggers an immune response in the majority of cats, but in 5 – 10% cats, the virus mutates, or the immune response fails, and the infection progresses to FIP. There are two forms of FIP, "wet" and dry." Symptoms include loss of appetite, weight loss, lethargy, and fever that doesn't respond to antibiotics.

In cats affected by the wet form, fluid accumulates in the abdomen or chest cavity. The dry, noneffusive form is characterized by severe inflammation of one or more organs (e.g., eyes, brain, liver, intestine, lungs). Diagnosis is difficult because the constellation of symptoms mimics other diseases. Zach's symptoms were consistent with the dry form which included the accumulation of inflammatory cells (granulomas) in his organs.

Although analyzing fluid from the abdominal cavity and blood for the presence of coronavirus is possible, the test cannot distinguish between the harmless coronavirus and the deadly variant. I opted to forgo any additional tests and accepted that the granulomas our vet detected when she palpated Zach's belly strongly indicated dry FIP.

There is no treatment for FIP, nor is there a vaccine to prevent FIP. Anti-inflammatory drugs such as corticosteroids and immunosuppressive drugs such as cyclophosphamide may temporarily suppress symptoms and improve quality of life, but they cannot cure the disease.

Although FIP is infectious, it is not contagious. Allowing Zach to interact with my mature, healthy cat family posed a negligible risk because most cats are exposed to FCoV during the first few weeks of life, and 50% of cats who develop FIV are less than two years old. In the absence of risk factors--most notably age at infection, genetic susceptibility, stress, malnutrition, and concurrent infections--exposure to coronavirus is unlikely to progress to FIP.

Given these risk factors, it's no surprise Zach developed FIP. His mother was abandoned by her humans, forcing her to hunt and scavenge to stay alive. He was the runt of the litter, neglected by his mother, malnourished and challenged by the stresses of survival in the outdoors.

Zach succumbed to FIP on September 12, 2018. Because of his increased appetite, energy, and interaction with my cats, I was unprepared for his sudden decline. Zach lost interest in food on September 10 and unwillingly allowed me to feed him via syringe. When labored breathing commenced on the 11th, I knew it was time to let him go.

We arrived at Bethel Park Animal Clinic early on the 12th, and Zach was immediately transferred to an oxygen chamber. An ultrasound revealed his breathing difficulty was caused by pulmonary effusion. Before surrendering him to the afterlife, I held his tiny body in my arms, covered him in tears and kisses, and told him how much I loved him. He was 14 weeks old.

Zach is buried in my back yard where I will plant a rose bush this summer. I still cry when I remember him, my sweet, affectionate boy who squawked when he wanted to be fed, snuggled with a resident cat when he was tired, and climbed onto my lap when he desired attention.



Zach, a kitten who succumbed to FIP



This year **Sister Betty Waigand** celebrates 75 years in religious life. First as a Sister of St. Francis, and now in the order Sisters for Christian Community. Still active, involved, and working at just a few months shy of 94, Sr. Betty has devoted her life to teaching, mentoring, counseling, and caring for many 2-legged and 4-legged souls. Shown (left) with her beloved Belle and José, two of many dogs she adopted, she's been a gentle and patient dog rescuer and caregiver.

Sr. Betty has written a memoir, ***Dog Heart***, chronicling her life of rescuing, fostering, and adopting dogs in great need, along with her career and growth in faith. A \$20 donation is requested for the book. Sr. Betty is generously donating half of the proceeds of the book's sales to Animal Advocates. Copies of the book can be ordered from Sr. Betty Waigand, 1458 Isoline Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15204.

