

Alley Animals

Editor's Note

We can't stop summer from coming but we're not obligated to welcome it either. Every year, just before the official start of summer when spring breezes and flowery blooms have disappeared, we wait with uneasy anticipation for what the heat of the fast approaching season will bring. What instances of horrid cruelty to animals will occur, what increased pain and suffering will the innocent bear due to summer's dark influence? Every year we hope and pray for a cool summer with frequent, gentle rain showers. People are cruel to animals all year long, but the extremes of nature in winter and summer ignite extremes of cruelty, or so we've found through decades of traveling the alleys. So we wait, this year is no different than any other, for what animals on the streets will endure in addition to their ever-present hardships of survival. And we hope our nightly presence in hundreds of inner city alleys will make a difference for innocent creatures there.

Some events we have no control over, we cannot exert any influence whatsoever no matter how much we wish we could. But every once in a great long while something happens that we could neither prevent nor foresee, something that could have been a disaster yet turns out better than we dared imagine. This kind of thing happens rarely but it does happen, one such occasion very recently.

Alice was keeping an eye on a cat who showed up in one of her alleys during the spring. This cat wanted nothing to do with people, but she soon recognized the sound of the alley car and this particular car in her area meant a meal would be left for her. She emerged from somewhere amidst a cluster of abandoned buildings, never from the same one, so it took a couple weeks of observation for Alice to pinpoint the cat's "home base." The reason this was of critical importance was that the little cat was a nursing mother. Even though this area is one of the more difficult and dangerous of the alley sections, trying to take this cat off the streets would mean leaving her infants behind to die—and this we don't do. Some people might disagree with this policy, but it is our policy nonetheless; we won't leave helpless kittens or puppies to starve to death.

A few weeks passed, during this time Alice returned to the location on each trip through the alleys, and fi-

nally she identified not only the abandoned building but also the window the little cat used for going in and out. And then one night Alice saw three tiny heads on the ledge inside the window, which was a few feet off the ground and fitted with bars. The mother cat could easily maneuver through the bars, but impossible for a person to do. In order to take the mother cat and her young away from this especially dangerous area, we would have to wait for her to bring the kittens out of the building.

Meanwhile, heavy rain storms rolled through every other day, it seemed. Pounding, driving rainstorms. One night Alice arrived in the alley to find the entire roof of the mother cat and kittens' abandoned building had come crashing down. The building's walls held, but the top was completely gone. The roof must have been in disrepair and buckled under the weight of so much rain.

As Alice stared in disbelief, envisioning all kinds of horrible possibilities of what happened to the feline family trapped under the debris, she heard a sound nearby. The little mother cat was unharmed and responding to the sound of the alley car. Alice felt a blast of relief, then she thought of the kittens. Were they crushed when the roof fell in? Might any of them be alive but devastatingly injured? The visions kept raking through her mind, and how the little mother cat must have felt knowing she couldn't get to her babies. Then another movement caught Alice's attention. There, on the ledge inside a window of a nearby abandoned building, were three tiny heads peeking out.

We'll never know how the little mama kitty extracted her offspring from the ruins of what was previously their "home," but somehow she did just that. A mother will go to the ends of the earth for her children; no matter what the species, mothers stand ready to risk life and limb, as this little mother did when she pulled all her kittens out of the deadly debris.

If the roof of one building in that block gave way under the weight of being waterlogged, others might as well, so getting these animals out of there was now imperative. Alice knew she had to work very quickly. With the entire feline family intact and their hideaway known, they could be taken without fear of leaving anyone behind. Alice enlisted Dee's help and they worked together double-time to collect first, the kittens, and then

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the mother cat. If there is a less-than-perfect aspect to this story, it is that the mother had to be separated from her babies. The three kittens, old enough to eat on their own, are in foster care awaiting adoption. The mama kitty was spayed and taken in by a friend of ours who accepts cats, from time to time, considered "unadoptable" by the usual standards. This brave little mama may never be anything other than fearful of humans, but she will be cared for by someone who respects an animal's right to distrust people.

The streets are filled with situations producing an outcome for animals that break our hearts over and over

again, some of these we have shared with you because we want you to understand the urgency of the work we do. It is as difficult for us to tell the stories with undesirable outcomes for innocent creatures as it is for you to read them. So when an occasion such as this one arises, an event of victory over circumstance, we hope you will find it as rewarding to read about as it is for us to share with you. A moment of gladness is good for the soul. However, this does not diminish the overwhelming suffering experienced by so many animals on the streets, or the need for us to maintain our nightly presence in the streets and alleys of the inner city. With your help and with you by our side, we'll succeed.

Spring Raffle Winners

1st Prize	Sharon Hurley, Normantown, WV
2nd Prize	Barbara Wallick, Phoenix, MD
3rd Prize	George & Barbara Dersch, Baltimore, MD
4th Prize	Shirley Brown, Middle River, MD
5th Prize	Rosemary Brennan, Gaithersburg, MD

Congratulations to all our raffle winners!

Special thanks to those of you who donated your prize to Alley Animals

Did You Know You can Donate Through Our Website

Just go to alleyanimals.org and click on our "Make A Donation" button to donate via Paypal. It's safe, secure and easy, and you don't need a Paypal account to donate.

Please Consider remembering Alley Animals in your Will. Animals on the streets will go on suffering, and if you have been blessed in this life we hope you will consider sharing your blessings with the least fortunate among us.

Alley Animals 410-823-0899

Wish List

Cat Food (dry & canned) Bleach
Dog Food (dry & canned) Paper Towels
Large plastic trash bags Unscented laundry soap

We gratefully appreciate donations in response to our Wish List.

**If you have items to donate call
Dick at 410-823-3319**

The Smile *by Alice Arnold*

It was the end of the night, the sun would be coming up soon and I was starting to get a little tired. The alley I was pulling into had trash cans all over the place; all night I had to move trash to the side of the alleys in order to drive through. It happens all the time, but I was tired and I thought, here we go again. I got out and moved one trash can; when I got back in the car I saw two more cans half-way down the alley. As I got closer, I thought "if I go slowly, I can move them with my bumper instead of getting out *again*." I do that sometimes. I can slowly push a can and move it out of the way instead of stopping the car, getting out, moving the can, and getting back in the car. Maybe I'm lazy, but it takes a lot less time to nudge a trash can out of the way and keep moving.

So I was going to use my car's bumper to slide the can over in order to pass by. Funny how things happen. The trash can fell over when I nudged it with my bumper, so I had to get out anyway to pick it up and move it to the side. As I did, I heard crying. I looked around to find out where the sound was coming from, and I realized it was coming from inside the trash can! I stood it up and pulled on the lid, it was on way too tight for me to pull off by hand, so I got the pry bar I keep with other tools in the car for situations like this. I managed to pry the lid open, and there inside the can was a small, terrified cat.

She had been locked in the trash can (for who knows how long), which I tipped over and then made a lot of noise trying to get the lid open. The terrified cat jumped out and ran down the alley. I hurried to the car for a can of cat food and hoped she would hear the sound when I opened it. She did, and she stopped in her tracks. I quickly opened another can and the little cat came running to it; by now I was kneeling on the pavement and holding out the can inviting her to eat. She must have been so hungry because she ate in a panic, as if the food would be taken away at any second. She was so busy eating, I don't think she realized I had started petting her and talking to her. In one quick motion I picked her up and got into the car with her. I had her on my lap as she kept eating, and I asked myself who could do this to an animal? Did somebody think it would be funny for the trash collector to open the lid of the can and find a terrified, starving cat? Or maybe the person thought no one would be able to get the lid off and the cat would die a terrible death inside the trash can.

While I was sitting there thinking of all this and how cruel people can be toward innocent, trusting animals, the kitty turned to me and started giving me kisses on my chin. She was purring so loudly she had me smiling. A human did this to her but she was purring and giving me kisses. After she ate all the food, I put her in a carrier and got out to move the rest of the trash cans to

make a driving path through the alley. I also opened all of them, just to be sure there weren't any more animals locked inside. I could hear the trash truck a few blocks over and knew it would be heading here before long, so I went on my way. The little cat was safe now, and her stomach was full; she fell sound asleep on the soft clean towel inside the carrier, and as I drove out of the alley, I couldn't help but smile.



Photo by Geoff Willis

Our wonderful friend, Jeanie, whisked this young calico kitty to the veterinarian for an examination, shots, de-worming, and to schedule her spaying. A staff member at the clinic knew of a woman looking for a feline family member, and this little one she believed would be perfect. The adoption process doesn't usually work out so smoothly or quickly; often animals wait extended periods of time for the right person or family to come along. Not this time! Within two weeks of being released from the death-trap of a trash can and taken out of the alleys, the young calico cat was settling into her permanent home with a person who described in unabashed enthusiasm, this was "love at first sight" for both of them.

Up For Adoption

Dee noticed a small scraggly dog in the overgrown yard of a vacant house, but she very nearly drove right past without seeing him. The sun was just beginning to rise and bits of light reflected off the metal links of the collar around the dog's neck as well as the chain keeping him tied to a tree, and this is what caught Dee's eye. She stopped and got out to assess the situation. There were no food or water bowls in the yard, so Dee took a large helping of food to offer the dog—if he would allow her to approach.

Indeed he did allow Dee to approach, and he strained at his chain to greet her with a cheerfully wagging tail before diving into the food she put down for him. He was a small dog with long fur clumped into thick mats all over his body; he must have been so uncomfortable, but he appreciated this encounter with Dee and the attention she showed him. Because he was friendly, Dee knew he might "belong" to someone even though he was tied up in a vacant yard with no food or water bowls with the only available shelter the ground under a dilapidated porch. (People do this and worse things to animals they claim to "own.") But Dee couldn't leave him. He was small and easy to handle, he was eager for human company; these factors made him not only an accessible target for people with evil intentions, but they also made him an inviting target, and we've seen all too often what happens to friendly, trusting animals at the hands of human monsters who want to harm the innocent.

Undoing the chain wasn't difficult and it didn't take but a second to release the dog, though Dee felt a twinge of worry he might try to run away from her once freed. Her concern was quickly allayed when he exuberantly clung to Dee when she picked him up and carried him to the car. While still in the area, Dee drove around looking for "Missing Dog" notices on utility poles but saw none. Later that day, she called shelters and checked the internet, but found no reports of a lost dog matching this one's description. Still, to be sure she was not taking someone's animal, Dee put a note by the chain where the dog had been tied which included contact information for anyone wanting to claim or inquire about him. No one contacted her.

Initially because of the sunlight reflecting off his collar that first caught Dee's attention, then because of his sparkling personality, we called this scraggly, happy dog Sparkles. No adapting was necessary in his foster home, he fit in with the other animals and he was eager to show his affection toward any person who crossed his path.

Subsequent phone calls to shelters as well as periodic checks of the internet yielded no potential "owner" looking for Sparkles, and we were all glad no one tried to get him back. Of course we were disgusted he was tied up and left in a vacant yard, but delighted Dee found and rescued him from an uncertain (and probably grim) fate. No longer would he use the ground beneath a dilapidated porch for shelter, no more would he strain against the chain tying him to a tree. Never again would he go without food or water. This was the start of a new life with such luxurious elements as his own bed and people who cared about him.

Sparkles patiently allowed himself to be shaved and bathed; what a relief it must have been to be rid of those painful mats covering his body. He was examined and vaccinated, and his neutering has been scheduled. Even if he hasn't yet found the human family who will love and adore him for the rest of his life, Sparkles' most striking feature is that he is one happy dog!



His filthy, matted fur now ancient history, this delightfully cheerful dog waits patiently for a person or family who will treasure him and never even consider putting him on the end of a chain.

Deserted

It happens all the time, probably everyday all over the world. One might think human consciousness should have risen above leaving animals to die in an empty house, but our conscience lags far behind other areas of progress. We can send sophisticated information-gathering machinery to other planets light years from our own; computer technology moves forward with dizzying speed; medical advances boggle the mind if one considers current procedures and treatment in contrast to what was possible only a few decades ago. Why is it, then, that the side of human nature having to do with kindness or right and wrong flounders in the dust while our scientific and intellectual endeavors soar?

Something so basic as taking responsibility for an animal who is dependent on us for not only his or her welfare, but ultimately life and death, seems to carry no significance for a discouragingly large percentage of the human population. We want a world with all kinds of animals in it, yet we tolerate people who mistreat them in ways that ought to bring an irreversible disgrace. Many people "forgive and forget" when someone who gets caught abusing or tormenting an innocent creature vows not to do such a thing in the future. After all, the saying goes: "they're only animals." This line of thought adds immeasurable difficulty to the work we do, as you can imagine. As long as a lackadaisical posture toward animal cruelty prevails, those of us who care and try to do what we can to make things better for other living beings will continue

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Alley Animals

In Loving Memory Of:

The precious dog who died in the crate. *Sandy Miller*

My mother, **Evelyn Alexander**, who passed last November, and **Darius**, my mother's cat whom she loved dearly. My mother was a member of the Feline Society and she loved all animals. *Sharon Hurley*

My beloved **Aunt Virginia**, who loved and cared for animals with all her heart. *Barbara Wallick*

Margaret Metz. Rest assured, Margaret, that Jackson the cat is looking out for Howard now.

Tami Morningstar-Metz

My wonderful loving husband who loved *all* animals. He passed on 3-6-2013. *Carolyn Hoffman*

My beloved wife, **Denise Hamer**. *George Hamer*

Gabby, my friend Carol Garrett's beloved canary. Gabby would sing to Carol every morning for almost 20 years. She really loved that bird. *Michele Hampton*

Herbie, my friend Karen's "smart-looking man." *Nancy*

My sweet little companion, **Kitty**; I lost her on March 19th. She was a stray kitten that lived with me for 15½ years. I miss her so very much, she was the best little friend I've had and I will always love and miss my sweet, lovable Kitty. *Dotty Cooney*

Prissy, who (along with his brother, Bear-Pup) was found starving in the ceiling of an abandoned mobile home in Winston Salem, N.C. Part Siamese, Prissy took to me and would arise every morning and share breakfast with me! He always let you know what he wanted and when. He developed pneumonia and, due to a congenital heart defect, we all lost Prissy. *M.J. Wolf*

Judy Berger. She loved all animals and they loved her. We miss you.

Stuart & Janet Moskovitz, and "your kids"

Big Steve. *Cornelia Vanderlain & Jim Cox*

My beloved husband, whom I lost many years ago, and my wonderful companion, **Remi**, a very special dog I lost February 19, 2013. *Anne Cramblitt*

Mom, **Madelon Decker**—you are still missed. Your family was blessed to call you Mom. Happy Birth Date.

Richard, Patti, and many grandchildren

Sparky, my heart is forever broken. I still cry everyday. Mommy misses you so much. I'll always Love You.

Tammy Dickson

Our dog and cat whom we recently lost to cancer only three months apart. The tears have not yet gone away.

Mary & Carl Bramer

Mel Velten & his little Yorkie, Pepper.

Maggie Hediger

My dear little **Lizzie**, who passed about one year ago.

Gary Vaughan

Our beloved boy, **Scooter**.

Wendy Kester

For my old retriever—For **Liza**, whose former owner found her age making her no fun anymore. She became mine and she and I had fun together. Lost her 10/12. Hole in my heart.

Donna B. Rose

My beautiful half black Lab/half Neufie, **Rufus**. He had a hemangiosarcoma on his spleen which spread to the right atrium of his heart; he started to bleed into his pericardium, compressing his heart. Now that he's gone, *my* heart is still shattered. I love and miss you **Rufus**.

Jeanne L. Blake, your mom

My **Oli**, who died April 17th. He came out of the palmetto one day and stayed in the yard for six months. Finally, one rainy morning I carried him inside and he spent the first week behind the toilet (he wasn't too happy). But he became as a child to me. We lost our son in '05, and I felt that God had sent this cat especially to fill a need in my heart. Oli had stomach problems from the start, and tests in March showed a large tumor that was found to be cancerous. Last week Oli refused food completely and I knew it was time. He went to sleep in my arms, my baby, my love and very special boy who loved me just as I loved him. We had Oli for six years, my brown striped sweetheart. I thought of all of you traveling the Baltimore alleys, and I knew you would understand.

Sad Meows, Joan Nash

Daphne, who is missed by her sister Velma, their cat Quince, and her entire human family The Costins.

Daniel Costin

Alley Animals

In Loving Memory *(continued from Page 5)*

My beloved Scottie, **Libby**, who died of kidney failure on April 1st. She was 13 years old, and we are grieving.

Barbara Patton

Misty, a black Lab and beloved companion of my niece, Autumn and her husband, Adam. They had to have Misty put to sleep at the end of April due to paralysis of her larynx, pneumonia, and finally cancer. She was not a candidate for surgery, so Autumn and Adam decided the humane thing to do would be to put her down. My sister drove up to the hospital and all said their goody-byes. Autumn and Adam take in older animals and give them the best life possible, but it's still hard to see them go. Misty was a sweet, loyal, and happy dog for an extra 5 years.

Sandy Graham

Our most beloved **Frodo**, whom we lost suddenly and without warning on March 26, 2013. We were all watching TV and he was in the middle of us, where he most liked to be; a love sandwich. This funny little feral jester was a prince in disguise and we fell in love with him. We adopted him into our home with 8 other family members, making our home of forest felines happy and full. We had him for 10 very short years; a lifetime with this boy would not have been enough. Frodo is survived by his true love, Serena, best buddy Bosco, and his loving cousins Merlin, Gryphon, Hayla, and Robin. Frodo escorted me everywhere inside our home. Faithful companion, unconditional friend, a true soulmate who gave me belly messages in the middle of the night when I had trouble going back to sleep. He always had a magical touch. I'm sure he threw a blood clot, just like his mama did. He was gone in an instant and for that I'm grateful; no hospitals, no strangers, no suffering, only unconditional love from those of us who knew and loved him. I look for Frodo's face in all the flowers coming up during this beautiful time of year. I'm sure his essence is in every one of them. Our love and thanks go out to all who knew Frodo and treated him with special care and kindness.

Vanessa Taylor

Chupi, Mary, Miguel, and Megan: We miss you all. You brought us great pleasure, joy, and comfort all the times we shared. We know you are waiting to see us again.

Colleen, Michael, Sophie, Chloe

Donna Sexton, who was a friend of mine. She worked with Alley Animals for years before she died in her apartment fire in Darlington, MD in October of 2003.

Anne Smawley

The Fluffster: she'd had three or four homes before I took her and promised her a forever home. She was a sweet, sweet cat.

Mary Jo Putney

Our **Freddie**, who died May 14, 2013. He was the stray cat we loved and cared for over 9 years. I'm crying as I write these words.

Beverly Blake

Doris T. Hendricks, a kindhearted lady who cared about animals suffering on the streets.

*Gary & Felicia Brown
George & Patricia Davis*

Our cousin, **Huntz:** We will miss you a lot. We will keep you in our prayers.

Love, Savannah & Blue

Miss Kitty, an untamed feline living in the untamed environment of rural New Jersey on the grounds of a wildlife sanctuary. Miss Kitty had sustained a crippling injury to her hind leg, and the sanctuary's director spotted her in the brush near a beaver den. Miss Kitty was then rescued by the joint efforts of two women whose own animal advocacy didn't ordinarily include cats. But these ladies weren't about to let a crippled, emaciated feline go without help. After a long process requiring patience and perseverance on the part of Hope and Helga, her human champions, Miss Kitty was successfully secured, taken to a veterinarian, and finally went to live with Helga. During the subsequent 10 years, Miss Kitty enjoyed the safety and sense of belonging to a family which included a variety of animals as well as her human companion, whom she adored. Although Miss Kitty never entirely trusted anyone but Helga, she honored me with the highest privilege of allowing me to touch her, if only for a few moments on two occasions. Thank you, Miss Kitty.

Lilly

In Honor Of:

Bessie, Mary Kate, & Hubert.

Josie Forrest

For all the lost and homeless animals in Baltimore's alleys to whom you give such loving care. God bless you all.

Marlene Pegg

My girlfriend, **Kary Irle**, in celebration of her birthday.

R.M. McKenzie

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Alley Animals

In Honor Of: (continued from Page 6)

James F. Leslie, in celebration of his 100th birthday.
Sandy Graham

Rebecca Schuman, on the occasion of her Bat Mitzvah.
Her Family & Celebrants

Patricia Carlton and Raven. *Margaret Detwiler*

My wonderful husband, **Paul Kent**, whom I love and adore: Thank you for helping me rescue and return lost dogs to their owners, and for loving our own rescue dogs and cats.
Lisa Kent

Every precious animal who suffers unspeakable pain and brutality at the hands of *totally evil "humans."* For all of you dedicated heroes who risk your own safety to help those unfortunate victims. God bless everyone of you and shield the victims.
Doris E. Richard

My mother, **Mildred**, from whom I get my love of all animals.
Gary Vaughan

My cat, **Ju-Ju**. When my granddaughter was little she could not pronounce his name, so she called him Goo-Goo the cat.
Ellen Taylor

Riley, a 7-year-old long-haired orange and white little gentleman who was clearly loved by his previous caregiver. Her family applied constant pressure on her to give him up when one of the relatives developed an "allergy". He is an affectionate, bossy little tyrant who doesn't realize how droll his is.
Diane Hankey

Alex, a 10-year-old long-haired tuxedo cat, who lost his home of eight years after his caregiver added a husband, a baby, and other animals to her life. Alex became "obsessed" with food, and was considered a nuisance. An animal organization took him and Alex spent the last two years bouncing from cages at store adoption days to various foster homes and he was so stressed he tended to vomit every few days. While he has been with me (since February), Alex has lost some weight, he is still circumferentially challenged! He is a sweet boy who has come out of his shell and is becoming more confident about his new home.
Diane Hankey

Nathan, who celebrated his fourth birthday on May 15th. He's a short-haired tuxedo cat who never had a home of his own, until now. While spending his entire life in foster homes and adoption cages is far from ideal, at least he was spared the horrors of the streets. However, he was stressed, timid, underweight, and had six teeth that needed to be removed. Now he is losing his shyness and asks for attention. Unfortunately, his blood work recently indicated possible lymphoma and he will need further tests. Whatever happens, I hope I can give him security and happiness in his life.
Diane Hankey

My niece, **Mary**, for the scrumptious blueberry pancakes and soy milk cappuccino she prepares for me every time I arrive for a visit, and the bottles of water she freezes for me to take when I leave on the long drive back; both of these offerings nourish my body and uplift my spirit more than I can say.
Lilly

My Dad, my wonderful Dad, *always* there for me in so many ways if I need him. What more could a daughter possibly hope for?
Lilly

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Alley Animals

Deserted *(continued from Page 4)*

to find ourselves on a steep, uphill climb.

When a very nice lady called to tell us about yet another situation where people moved and left animals in an empty house, we were thankful she became aware of the problem. Some people wouldn't have stepped in as this lady did when she heard the dog barking from inside a house she knew had been vacated a week earlier. By the time she got into the house to take food and water to the cat and dog, both were ravenously hungry and dehydrated. And frightfully thin from having nothing to eat for at least a week, possibly longer. She took over their care and called us for help with the dog; the cat would become part of this kind lady's feline family, but she wasn't able to handle a dog.

Our friend, John, who has been a godsend to us over the years, picked up the abandoned dog and agreed to foster him. A beagle mix, the dog is a good boy with a sweet temperament. The one drawback is that he really likes to dig holes in the yard.

The lopsided contrast in human nature, intellectual progress on the one hand but moral and ethical barrenness on the other, is no where more vividly apparent than in the field of animal work. But the presence of good people, such as the lady who went out of her way to stop two animals from suffering to death, and you—our supporters and champions—keeps this world of ours from utter darkness. It's hard to care. When you find out how much pain animals experience as compared

to what difference one person or one organization can effect, it's easy to become discouraged. This is why we focus on the good things and remember if people of kindness stick together, if we care together and uphold each other, we may not win every battle but goodness will live on. I think the beagle would agree.



What a story he could tell, one that would surely break our hearts in two; so many deserving animals who believe they are part of a family find themselves castaways in a hostile, deadly world. Providence smiled on this boy and his feline sister, pulled out of the empty house where they would have died a lingering death because the people they thought were their protectors, their family, were instead devoid of conscience and any sense of right and wrong. Such desertion of animals requires a heart of stone.