

ANIMAL *lover*

News for you from the Montgomery County Humane Society

Winter 2018

Rusty, star of the stage, gives back

Right before Thanksgiving, we received a call from Ken K., who told us that Rusty, an 8½-year-old Feist mix who was adopted from MCHS in 2008 was starring in the Olney Theatre Center's recent production of *Annie*. Ken offered MCHS tickets to the production, both Rusty's cast tickets and some donated by The Olney Theatre, as a fundraiser for MCHS.

"Rusty had never acted before *Annie*," Ken said, but when a friend told him about the audition, he and Rusty decided to give it a try. Rusty aced the audition and got the part!

Ken told us that "Rusty's always been very smart," so he wasn't surprised that he performed well during the audition and rehearsals. "The only mystery was how he'd react in front of an audience," he said. "Rusty performed beautifully – he even knew when it was time to face the audience and receive his applause!" Ken said with pride.

Together, the ticket donations by Rusty and the Olney Theatre Center raised \$300 to help homeless animals. Thank you!

Rusty and co-star
Noelle Robinson
on stage.



Supporters include MCHS in their will

Mary and Max Van Balgooy adopted their three cats – Emme, Pumpkin and Monty – from the Montgomery County Humane



Mary Van Balgooy

Society, and the bond with their cats prompted them to include MCHS in their estate plans. "Our animals have given us so much joy," says Mary. "The extraordinary work MCHS does made us pleased to offer something besides our yearly donations."

Max, a small business owner and part-time college professor, and Mary, a nonprofit executive, are passionate about animal welfare and believe that by giving locally, their gifts will have a bigger impact. "It's wonderful to know that we'll be saving and helping animals at MCHS beyond our lifetimes," Mary says.

Estate gifts provide a legacy for your support. If you've included MCHS in your estate plans or would like to learn how, please contact James Nolan, MCHS Director of Development, at (240) 616-1973 or JNolan@mchumane.org, and he'll be happy to help.

Your gifts always save lives

Our work is 100% funded by private donations, and your gift is **guaranteed** to change the life of a homeless animal. Please give today.

Visit mchumane.org or use the enclosed envelope.



**Thanks
for making
2017 great!**



Dear friends,

For every charity, year-end is an important time. Donors often save up their contributions until December, so we've been busy processing our year-end donations and sending out our thank-you letters.

The end of 2017 was very strong, with lots of generous donations from so many wonderful supporters. Thank you to everyone who contributed to MCHS in the past few months, and, of course, all year long. You're the reason that nearly 700 animals were helped this year, and why we've adopted out more than 2,100 cats and dogs since we became independent in 2014.

Last year, your generosity also included special gifts such as a new kennel floor donated by Drs. Esther and Jay Ocuin, a cat room sponsored by Marilyn Young, and a small transport vehicle donated by Haley Farmer. We also have a new industrial dryer (thanks to Rick Barrett for leading the effort), and a new refrigerator for medications thanks to our Facebook followers.

Every contribution is vital to our work and our success. Thank you, again, to all our donors!

On a warmer note (because it's so cold outside), **Paws in the Park is coming up on April 22** – your dog's ears perked up just now, as you read this! Be sure to mark your calendar, and we'll see you there!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink.

Cris Bombaugh
President and CEO

**You saved
Nike's life.
Now, he's
changing
Laura's.**

***MCHS rescue
becomes certified
Emotional
Support Animal***



Nike in his new ESA vest.

Nike is a two-year-old Great

Pyrenees/Lab mix who was languishing in a rural shelter at the beginning of August. Like all of the animals there, he was at risk of euthanasia. When the MCHS rescue team met him, they knew we could help him find the right home, and they brought him back, along with as many other dogs and cats as they could take. Then Laura came to MCHS and found him.

Laura, 21, suffers from severe anxiety and depression, and was hoping to find some relief in the companionship of a pet. She met Nike, and he immediately leaned against her. She fell in love, and adopted him the same day.

But Laura didn't realize how special Nike was until she took him to a professional dog trainer. The trainer saw how smart and sensitive he was and suggested taking him to classes to become a certified emotional support animal.

Nike attended several weeks of classes, passed at the head of his class, and he now accompanies Laura everywhere she goes. Laura says she's especially grateful for "the loving care" Nike gives her, and for him "just being there when I need him." Thank you for providing the support that made this happy ending possible.

**Lenny and Squiggy say
"Happy New Year!"**

You send Lenny and Squiggy and the rest of the humane education team out to meet with more than 1,000 children, teens and adults every year. These popular Guinea pigs are gearing up for another year of spreading the word about how we can advance animal welfare together in 2018.



Eric goes home for the holidays!

Eric was more than ready to go home. A sweet, two-year-old, domestic short hair was rescued by MCHS from an over-crowded public shelter at the end of September. Then, for the next two and a half months he waited... and waited... and waited, while he watched dozens of other cats go home. No one, it seemed, wanted to adopt him.

Fortunately, he was here, in the care of MCHS, where your support enabled us to treat his ear infection and give him the love and TLC he needed while he awaited adoption.

MCHS staffer James Nolan visited Eric often. Whenever he did, Eric would climb onto his shoulders and rub against his face, seemingly saying, "I'm yours." None of us could understand why Eric was overlooked, but perhaps he was waiting for James to be ready for him. James had lost his elderly cat, Charlotte, to kidney disease in October. Just before Christmas, Eric went home with James.

Eric (now "Snowball") is loving life in his new home. He enjoys chasing a red laser dot and sleeping on his electric blanket. He's become quite the "bed hog," says James.



Cats go home for the holidays, thanks to a generous donor

Holly, Niblet and Frankie are just three of the 30 lucky cats sent "Home for the Holidays" in 2017, thanks to the generosity of Suzanne Beckner.

For each of the past four years, Suzanne has paid the adoption fees for thirty cats to encourage their adoptions. She makes the gifts in memory of her late husband, Bill, a committed cat lover and long-time MCHS volunteer.

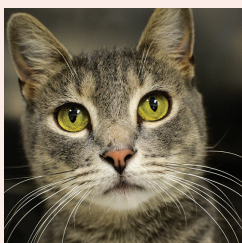
On behalf of Holly, Niblet, Frankie and the 27 others who are now curled up on couches and playing with their new families, thank you, Suzanne!



Holly



Frankie



Niblet

Meet your Board



Rick Bellman

Rick Bellman didn't grow up with pets in the home, but first developed his love of animals when he began dating his wife, Geri while they were both in high school. "Geri's dog Fluffy got lost, and we spent every day for two weeks looking for him. When we found him, it was like a miracle," Rick tells us.

This experience was the start of Rick's lifelong love of animals, and he and Geri travel with blankets in the trunks of their cars, always ready to help if they come across a lost or injured animal that needs their help. "We're always doing whatever we can to save animals," Rick says. "For the past 20 years, we've always had between seven and 12 animals in the house at a given time."

The Bellmans have been involved with MCHS for more than 20 years – Geri has worked with MCHS since 1998, and Rick has served on the Board since 2005. Rick places particular importance on MCHS's humane education programs, and looks forward to the organization's plans to expand these programs in 2018 and beyond.

Rick, co-owner of Paul's Wine and Spirits in DC, has hosted *Wines for Canines and Felines* for the past 10 years. This event raises thousands of dollars to support MCHS programs annually.



601 S. Stonestreet Ave., Rockville, MD 20850
mchumane.org • (240) 252-2555
mchs@mchumane.org
Federal Tax ID# 52-6044968

Cats can get heartworm, too

Did you know that cats can get heartworm too? Symptoms include vomiting, diarrhea, and difficulty breathing.

Heartworm is carried by mosquitoes, and there is currently no treatment of the disease for our cat friends.

Talk to your vet about ways to protect your cat, and visit www.heartwormsociety.org/heartworms to learn more.



You're saving Remy's life right now

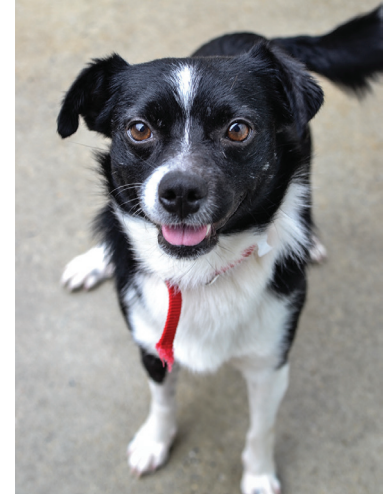
Two-year-old beagle mix receives treatment for heartworm

Many of MCHS's partners lack the financial resources necessary to test for some common diseases found in cats and dogs. Thanks to your generosity, the MCHS rescue team has the resources to run vital tests on the animals on-site at our partner shelters.

It was one such test that told us that Remy, a two-year-old beagle mix, had heartworm. We knew we could treat him, which the public shelter could not, and we brought him back to MCHS in the middle of December.

Remy's treatment for this life-threatening disease will take months, but thanks to you, Remy has the time he needs in our care, where he can get lots of rest, medications and the careful regimen he needs to recover. We expect Remy to be available for adoption in the coming weeks – if you think he might be a good fit for your family, visit www.mchumane.org/adoptions to see if he's ready.

Heartworm can often be fatal. Talk to your veterinarian about testing and how to protect your dog.



Paws in the Park is coming!

Sunday, April 22, 2018

at Bohrer Park, Gaithersburg, MD

- Agility competitions
- Contests, music, prizes, food, vendors
- 1 mile dog walk
- Kids' activities



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