

# CRITTER CHATTER MAGAZINE



NEWS FROM THE  
SPCA OF WAKE COUNTY

ISSUE 3 | SUMMER/FALL 2023

## BIG NEWS

YEARS IN THE MAKING!

PAGES 2 & 3

## THE HEALING POWER OF LOVE

PAGES 4 & 5

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# CRITTER CHATTER MAGAZINE

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**Pet Adoption Center & Business Office**  
200 Petfinder Lane | Raleigh, NC | 27603  
call: 919-772-2326 visit: spcawake.org  
nonprofit tax ID # 56-0891732



**ABOUT US:** Founded in Raleigh in 1967, SPCA Wake is an independent, 501(c)(3) animal welfare organization. Funded by charitable support,

we provide vital community programs that pick up where local government agencies leave off. We work in 59 NC counties through collaborative partnerships that save pets and help people.

We are not affiliated with the ASPCA and we do not receive tax dollars or government funds. We are supported by caring donors like YOU.

SPCA Wake holds a 4-star rating (highest rating possible) from Charity Navigator – the nonprofit sector’s premier trust indicator.



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## You Make All the Difference

**Y**our support makes everything we do here at the SPCA of Wake County possible. All this life-saving work? Yes, you.



**Above:** Kim Janzen, President & CEO

*I am deeply grateful for your continued commitment to the pets and people in need in our community.*

The landscape of animal welfare is shifting. The status quo of animal sheltering across North Carolina is being challenged, and because of this, big changes are underway right here and now in Raleigh.

As you may know, SPCA Wake works in 59 counties across our state, supporting many rural and resource-strapped areas in order to save more lives and help more people. As a result of this work, SPCA Wake has identified a need for the people and pets in our region and beyond that isn’t currently being met.

To deepen our work in Wake County while expanding services geographically, SPCA Wake has embarked on an endeavor to build North Carolina’s first-ever Regional Campus for Pets and People. This project will help transform entire communities and deliver profoundly needed resources for people and pets across the state.

Over the past two years, we’ve been working with a small group of community leaders to raise dedicated funds for this new building. As of August 2023, we have raised \$16.7 million out of a \$21.5 million goal. And just recently, we received the largest single gift in SPCA Wake’s 56-year history.

Community philanthropist Susan Ward of Raleigh made a \$5 million donation to the campus project. This extraordinary gift honors the deep love Susan and her late husband Randall had for homeless pets, as well as their belief and investment in SPCA Wake’s mission.

In honor of Susan and in memory of Randall, the campus will be named: **The Susan and Randall Ward Regional Campus for Pets and People.**



Above left: An artist's rendering of the new Admission & Resource Center. Above right: the current Adoption Center

### **About the Regional Campus**

Located at 200 Petfinder Lane in Raleigh on a 22-acre tract of land, this regional campus includes our existing Adoption Center that will be joined by a new, state-of-the-art 25,000-square foot Admission & Resource Center. This new building contains a Learning Center, Community Resource Center, and Veterinary Medical Center and will replace our current admissions facility, built in Garner in 1970.

This campus will serve as a place for the community to come to for help as well as a central hub to deploy resources across the state. Groundbreaking on the new facility is scheduled for June 2024 with the grand opening in late 2025.

### **More Prevention and More Lives Saved**

This new campus will increase the number of homeless pets we transfer into our care from NC counties with high intake and low adoptions to reduce euthanasia across the state.

In NC, over 200,000 dogs and cats enter animal shelters each year; 60,000 of them never make it out<sup>1</sup>. Working with municipal animal agencies across the state will allow us to leverage public-private partnerships toward a shared vision to end the euthanasia of healthy dogs and cats.

In addition, the new Veterinary Medical Center will focus on prevention and double the number of spay/neuter and wellness services provided annually to the pets of families unable to afford the service elsewhere.

### **Expanded Safety Net Services**

Through our current services, SPCA Wake is helping people provide necessary care for their beloved pets. As a result, *we are changing the narrative that the only solution people have when facing hardship is losing their beloved pet.* We are expanding these services to provide a safety net and help people care for their *whole family*. The Community Resource Center will provide the needed space to help families access affordable pet care and the resources to help them through temporary hardships.

### **Youth Education**

Through partnerships with youth education organizations like the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Boys & Girls Clubs, and YMCAs, SPCA Wake's Learning Center will provide the necessary space for children to participate in education opportunities that foster values such as kindness, honesty, and tolerance.

The Center will provide space for pet behavior classes to strengthen the human-animal bond through positive, reward-based training. In addition, professional development programs for animal shelter professionals from area shelters will help them to strengthen and build new people-focused services throughout NC.

This capital project provides a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make substantial, sustainable, and lasting improvements in the lives of pets, people, and our NC community for decades to come.

**For more information, including floor plans, building renderings, and commemorative naming opportunities, visit: [spcawake.org/bigplans](https://spcawake.org/bigplans).**

1. Averages based on year over year data 2009-2019 as reported annually to the NC Department of Agriculture.

# WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

*Everything*

The key to Potter's recovery? Love. And regular skin maintenance. But mainly love.



When we first saw her profile picture, we knew she needed our help.

**T**here's no denying it — being in an animal shelter is stressful. The cacophony of strange noises and smells, new animals coming and going, unfamiliar food and bedding — it can be a lot for any pet, but for some, it's uniquely difficult. Though the staff at SPCA Wake works hard to reduce pets' stress and create a fear-free environment for all the animals in our care, there is truly no place like home.

Potter arrived at SPCA Wake with a horrible skin condition and a known history of allergies. Her condition caused irritation all over her body, even on the pads of her feet and inside her eyelids. **Her constant discomfort led her to excessively scratch, lick, and nibble at her sore spots, which only made matters worse.** Much of her body was bright red, hairless, and covered in scabs. In other words, this girl was completely miserable.

## **First things first:**

Finding the source of Potter's allergies and taming her inflammation were top priorities. First, our veterinary team treated Potter with a regimen of medication, soothing baths, and specialty diets to address the root of the problem. It didn't work. So we tried immunosuppressant drugs to help relieve the allergy's effects. It didn't work. Then it was steroids and nerve pain management. But on top of everything, she began to lose her appetite too. We

were addressing Potter's condition from all angles. So why wasn't she getting better?

## **Two steps forward, one step back**

One day, Potter would seem to improve, and the next, she'd get worse. There didn't seem to be any rhyme or reason to it, and our concern for Potter only grew. Potter's skin irritation would improve for a short time, only to worsen once again.



Before



After



Our staff and Potter's foster family were frustrated but not ready to give up. Though her skin condition was proving more difficult than we had initially thought, one thing was clear — **Potter's will to live was more than skin deep.**

After months of diagnostics, failed treatments, and ruling out possibilities, we'd managed to identify Potter's specific condition as a disease called Feline Atopic Skin Syndrome (FASS). This allergic skin condition was induced by allergens found in most environments (e.g., dust mites, pollens, molds) and worsened by stress — not the kind of thing easily controlled in a shelter environment, or even a foster home. It turned out what Potter really needed was a change in surroundings. She needed a home.

### **Potter hits the jackpot**

By this point, Potter had been in and out of a foster home and living at the shelter for over 365 days. To circumvent the issue of first impressions, we shared

Potter's photos online and explained her unique situation. "See this crusty, red cat? She may not be winning any beauty pageants, but she has love to give, too. Would someone give her a chance?"

That's when Christi saw Potter's photo and immediately fell in love.

### **All you need is love**

**Potter's story is a testament to the often-overlooked importance of love.** Within two months of Potter settling into her new home, her skin condition had already drastically improved — beyond what we'd dared to hope was possible.

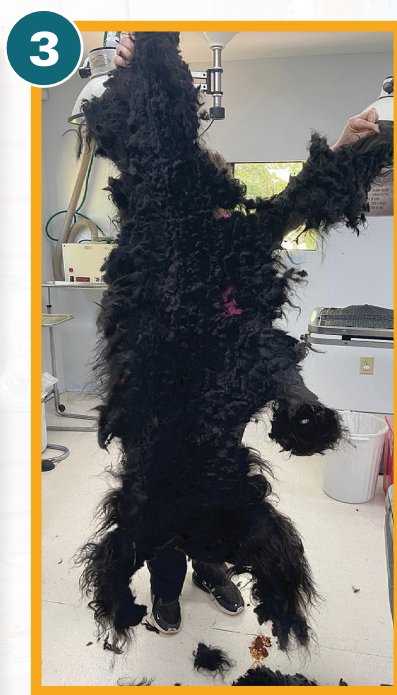
We hardly recognized the plump, furry version of Potter we saw in Christi's photos. While Potter's skin condition is still monitored closely, **the unexplainable power of love seemed to make the biggest difference in the life of this once-miserable calico.**

Potter's mom said she was blown away by how well Potter fit in with their family. We are so grateful to Potter's mom for not judging a book by its cover and for your generous support that gave Potter this chance in the first place. **Because of you, Potter is now the happy, beautiful kitty on the outside that she always was inside.** ♦



Potter in her new home: this photo is worth a thousand words!

# SUNNY'S EPIC SHAVEDOWN



**1** When Sunny arrived at SPCA, his coat was covered in matted hair. This 2-year-old poodle/sheepdog mix needed a fresh start after his owner surrendered him, stating he could no longer provide the care and attention Sunny deserved.

**2** All of Sunny's fur was severely matted, painfully tugging on his skin. So while Sunny was already "out" for his neuter surgery, our team got to work relieving Sunny of his unkempt coat.

**3** It took three people an hour and a half to completely remove Sunny's mats, and his entire coat came off in one piece. His massive knots weighed about five pounds — a heavy, dirty burden he would never again have to bear.

**4** With a new look and a newly brightened spirit, Sunny was finally ready to find a family. His new mom had been wanting to adopt for some time, and when she met Sunny, it was love at first sight! **Because of your support, Sunny will be loved, groomed, and cherished for the rest of his life.**



Sunny's new hair cut let his true personality shine!

# LIFE OUTSIDE THE CRATE



The crate Sammi lived in prior to his rescue.

Sammi, living his best life outside the crate!

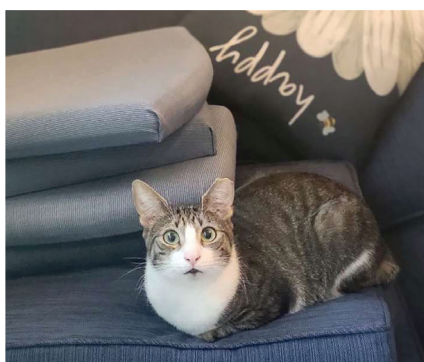
**W**hen an older woman in Sampson County, NC suddenly inherited about 20 cats after the passing of a family member, she didn't know what to do. Though she was determined to do right by the cats, she also struggled with her own recent cancer diagnosis. **She cared for the cats deeply and meticulously cleaned their carriers every day**, which was an impossible task for an elderly woman suffering from a debilitating illness.

Inevitably, the caretaker became overwhelmed. The cats began to escape their carriers, the house quickly deteriorated, and the situation grew out of control. Fortunately, a local rescue caught wind of the situation and reached out to SPCA Wake to ask for assistance.

**Because of your support, we openly accepted as many cats**

**as we could at the time, and we hope to rescue even more.**

Sammi (*pictured above*) was one of them. Though he was initially terrified and took some time to trust his new surroundings, it wasn't long before his silly antics and cheerful personality were revealed! After living a good portion of his life in a crate, **Sammi is now living his best life in his new home** — just as his previous owner wished for him all along.



Sammi takes advantage of all the cozy spots and pillows his new home has to offer!

## IN MEMORY OF JERRY KROLL



Jerry and his rescue dogs at the SPCA's Dog Walk event.

**T**o call Jerry Kroll a superhero would be an understatement.

For over a decade, Jerry volunteered his time advocating for senior and overlooked dogs, patiently encouraging SPCA Wake visitors to interact with them. Jerry spotted qualities in these dogs that others would miss. He would come back each day, highlighting each long-timer dog and sitting with them for hours until an adoptive family took them home.

**Over the years, Jerry found homes for over 300 overlooked dogs.**

"Jerry is being greeted by so many wagging tails in heaven," wrote Jodi Simmons Battle on the SPCA's Facebook page. "We should all be so fortunate."

**We couldn't agree more.**



This QR code is available for anyone who would like to make a gift in Jerry's memory.

# PROUDLY WEAR YOUR HEART ON YOUR SLEEVE

...and your hoodie, magnet,  
t-shirt, blanket, notebook,  
tumbler, tote bag, and more!

Represent rescue in style with SPCA Wake's new merch line! This specialty-curated collection includes **original artwork designed by shelter staff!** Feel good knowing every purchase saves shelter pet lives in our community.



## PLUS!

Stop by the SPCA Retail Store located in the Adoption Center lobby TODAY for a variety of pet supplies, gifts, and more!

**SPCA Wake Pet Adoption Center** located at:  
200 Petfinder Ln.  
Raleigh, NC 27603

Scan to view our **NEW** online store, or visit [spcawake.org/shop](https://spcawake.org/shop)

