



**VBSPCA**

July 2021

**Fostering**  
Saves Lives

**Celebration**  
Party For The Animals

**Scott Taylor**  
Donor Spotlight

# **CREATURE** **CHRONICLES**

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*Charlie, Cover Model* Photo Credit: Madison Duprey (Charlie's Foster Mom)

Charlie came to the VBSPCA as a young puppy. He wasn't yet ready for adoption, so one of our foster families stepped up to take him in until he had all of the necessary vaccines. Charlie was adopted in early July and is now enjoying life in his forever home!



## 2021 VBSPCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Scott Taylor, Board Chair  
Leila Bradley, Vice Chair  
John Wallace, Treasurer  
Angie Lombardi, Secretary  
Trish Blue, Past Chair  
William Campbell

Todd Eichman  
Jan Fine  
Towana Hunter  
Ashley Knepper  
Brad Kuether  
Amy Mallett

Rebekah Monteith  
Tom Sheppard  
Adam Varner  
Les Watson

# Letter From Derby Brackett



So much has happened over the past four months- both personally and professionally- it's difficult to know where to begin. But the best beginning is always with our mission, so I will start there. The challenges of COVID-19 and 2020 continued into 2021, but we have met the limitations head on with the same dedication, determination, and compassion for those we serve every day. As of June, our capacity restrictions have been lifted and our shelter has found

its new normal. We will still focus on safety and sanitation while continuing to provide superior customer service to the increased number of public visitors in our building. The clinic will continue to operate with enhanced safety precautions and curbside check-in until further notice while providing full services to our public clients and medical care to our shelter animals.

One of the other critical aspects of our new normal is the opportunity to welcome volunteers back into the facility. We are focusing on getting new folks involved and re-engaging previous volunteers that have taken the required break from our shelter. So, whether one's interest is in cats or dogs, fostering, Visiting Paws, or special events, we look forward to having our volunteers back on board. We need them now more than ever.

Over the past couple of months, we've had an incredible response from our donors who have continued to provide support for our operational sustainability. Through our Give Local 757 efforts- and a special matching donor- we raised over \$30,000 for the animals. This is life-saving support for which we are forever grateful. In addition, we received \$115,000 from the Alfred L. Nicholson Fund of the Hampton Roads Community Foundation which provided outdoor lighting to our parking lot for increased safety, added essential acoustical tiles throughout the kennel and the lobby to help with the noise levels to improve both animal living spaces and quality of human workspace, and enhanced the doorways throughout the shelter for increased safety and accessibility. We are very grateful to the HRCF for the continued support of our mission with improvements to our aging facility.

Moving forward, we are in the early stages of a clinic expansion project to better meet the needs of our growing community. It became clear during the pandemic that an increase in our capacity and productivity is needed, and this has become a priority as we move into our next fiscal year. More to come as we better understand what our potential can be and should be as we grow our clinic operations.

Our new fiscal year brings forth another change- the end of an incredible era with Scott Taylor leading our organization as our Board Chair. Scott has been an inspirational leader and you can read more about his dedication in the following pages. He and his wife, Katie, and their two "girls", Liv and Penny, will forever be a part of our VBSPCA family- and my heart. Leila Bradley of TowneBank will step in as Board Chair on September 1st, and we look forward to beginning a new chapter at the Virginia Beach SPCA.

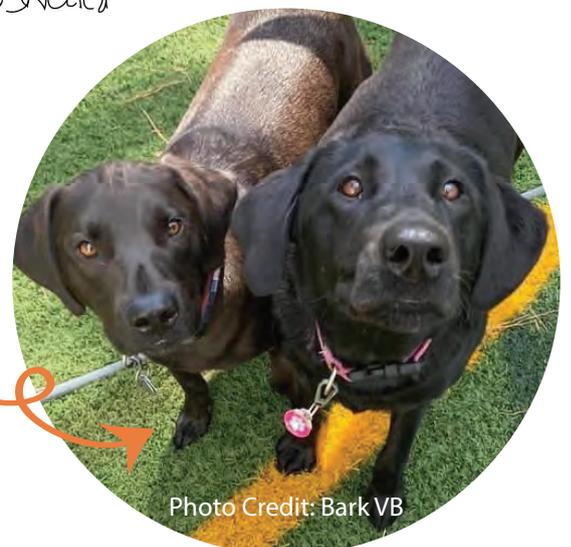
We have learned many lessons from the past 18 months, and I personally have learned from my own challenges of the past four months. For those who don't know, my husband and I were in a serious car accident in March, and we are both incredibly fortunate to have survived-along with our two beloved pups, Rainey Storm and Rambler. I have always viewed life as a magical, unpredictable adventure and these past few months have proven that to me. I know I have many to thank for the compassionate work that never stopped during my recovery. I offer sincere gratitude to my Executive Team, led flawlessly by Kate Baldwin who partnered with Dr. Woyma, Emily Peck, Shiona Attenweiler, and Vikki Spruill. A CEO could not ask for a better team to step in- I am proud, I am humbled, and I am truly blessed. So, too, are the animals of the VBSPCA.

Onward and upward, we will now go. We have three events coming up in the fall so please mark your calendars. Let's Party for the Animals on September 19th at the Shack on 8th; we will tee off at Redwing on October 8th for our Puttin' for Paws Charity Golf Tournament; and get ready for our Halloween themed Paw Crawl coming in late October. We have much to celebrate and I look forward to seeing you soon.

For the animals,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Derby D. Brackett".

Derby D. Brackett  
CEO



*Rainey Storm  
& Rambler*

Photo Credit: Bark VB

# DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Scott Taylor



Scott Taylor initially joined the Virginia Beach SPCA Board of Directors in 2013, and he stepped in as Board Chair in 2017. His natural ability to lead has successfully guided the organization through unique periods of change, and we have been truly fortunate to have his expertise and philanthropic spirit at the helm of our entire organization.

In addition to Scott's service through leadership, he has sponsored numerous VBSPCA events; he has donated the time and services of his businesses, Taylor Construction and Va Valet; he has cultivated and strengthened our community of supporters; and he continues to be an advocate for the animals of our community. We are grateful for his years of support, and his legacy at the Virginia Beach SPCA will undoubtedly resonate for many years to come.



**Q: How did you first get involved with the VBSPCA?**

A: About a decade ago, Dave Stephens, who was head of the Development Committee at the time, asked me to take a tour of the shelter. The impact that was evident during that first visit spoke to me and I knew I had to do more than volunteer or donate. I asked Dave how I could be involved in a larger capacity and it segued into the exact reason he invited me to the shelter- to become a member of the Board of Directors.

**Q: What area of the organization inspires you the most?**

A: First is the current teamwork. Although the departments are so diverse, the collective efforts to make the organization successful always confirm the power of a team. Secondly, I think it goes without saying, the animal welfare impact is the inspiration behind our Board's commitment to the constant betterment of the organization. Whether it's the clinic's impressive annual impact, the constant care delivered by fosters, the shelter's dedication to finding forever homes, or the educational programs shaping the minds of our younger generations, the animal welfare impact is a shockwave that continues to affect more and more people and animals as the organization grows.

**Q: What part of today's VBSPCA and path forward are you most excited about?**

A: I'm most excited about the organization's current leadership and its future finances. I feel that my Board Chair legacy will be known by doing what was necessary to make decisions to dramatically alter the financial health of the organization. My shared perspective has implemented what I hope will continue in regards to Derby's leadership style and reporting protocols as well as a commitment to operate inside a balanced budget no matter how difficult the decisions are to get to the finish line successfully.



**Q: How have pets impacted your life?**

A: My father had an abundance of compassion for animals and as a result, my brother and I were raised with an understanding about what it takes to correctly care for a myriad of different animals. As life has progressed, it's no secret I have a very focused and efficient lifestyle and as a result, my several feline family members are the perfect match for me. They're loving and independent at the same time. They operate on their own schedules and have unique personalities that require focus, dedication, and self-sufficiency that meshes so well with my companion animal needs. Liv and Penny are both perfect additions to our little family.

**Q: How have your philanthropic values impacted your life?**

A: To whom much is given, much is required. This is a lesson I learned early in life. My parents worked hard and sacrificed for not only us, but for others. Through their example, I understood the importance of making time and providing resources to better the lives of others. I don't volunteer or donate to make myself feel good- heaven knows I have plenty to accomplish that requires my time and blessings. Rather, I donate my time and resources because of the needs of organizations that are important to me. To me, being philanthropic is not a choice- it's a requirement.

# HAPPY TAILS



## Buttercup

Adopted May 2021

Some animals have to wait longer than others for their happily ever after. That was certainly the case for Buttercup, a six year old Calico who wound up at the VBSPCA in December 2020. In addition to a second chance, she also needed surgery for severe dental disease.

Buttercup got the medical care she needed at our clinic, but then had to wait a long time for her adoption dreams to come true. For nearly five months, this gorgeous girl waited patiently for the right people to come along. She eventually became our longest feline resident at the time.

Terri and her daughter began their search for a new pet after their cat Jonah passed away. In May, they came across Buttercup's picture and had to meet her. They quickly realized Buttercup would be the perfect cat to add to their family.

Buttercup now enjoys the life of a beloved pet, chasing laser pointers and chirping around the house. "She has brought us so much joy," says Terri. "She spends most of her time in my daughter's room and sleeps with her. It's her happy spot."



*Doug*

## LONG TERM RESIDENTS

### Finding Their Perfect Match

At the Virginia Beach SPCA, the average length of stay for a shelter animal is 17 days; however, sometimes it can take much longer for an animal to find a home. Whether they are overlooked because of age or personality or an unknown past, the VBSPCA gives every adoptable animal as much time as needed for their personality to shine. We believe all adoptable animals belong in a home, and we are willing to wait patiently for that second chance to become a reality. Doug and Fatty Maw Maw are two recent examples of long term residents who found their way home.

Doug is a two year old Terrier mix who arrived at the VBSPCA in March. He was nervous and under-socialized, which caused him to shut down in front of strangers. The kennel staff worked with him to build his confidence and teach him commands, but as time went on he became more and more stressed by the shelter environment. He was placed in a foster home in hopes that a quieter environment would help him come out of his shell. And he did. Two months after Doug arrived at the VBSPCA, an adopter came into the shelter looking for a dog that had all the qualities we came to love in Doug. He was happily adopted and is now living the good life in his forever home.

Feline resident Fatty Maw Maw is another example of an adoptable animal who waited a long time for her forever family. She was brought to the shelter at 14 years old, which is not uncommon. Senior pets often find themselves in a shelter, and they are often harder to adopt. In addition to the hurdle presented by her age, Fatty Maw Maw had dental disease, early kidney disease, and she was FIV+. Our clinic tended to her medical needs while our staff worked to find her perfect adopter. It took three months, but we never lost hope- she was adopted in April!



*Fatty Maw Maw*



*Empathy*  
THE FOUNDATION  
OF EVERY ADOPTION



# Community

## Creating a More Compassionate Community through Education and Awareness

The Virginia Beach SPCA is committed to being a resource for pet parents and animal lovers within our community. It's not enough to create adoptions - it is critical to our mission to ensure those adoptions are happy and lasting.

One of the ways we hope to keep more pets in their homes is through educating the public on responsible pet ownership and guiding them through potential issues. For more than a year, the VBSPCA has been building a Pet Care Resource Center on our website and sharing this information through our social media channels and e-newsletter. We add to our library monthly, with topics ranging from pet poison prevention to how to select safe pet toys to heat safety tips.

An example of our recent educational campaigns centered around separation anxiety. With more COVID-19 vaccinations and fewer restrictions, pets who have gotten used to having their people around 24/7 could have some trouble adjusting to new schedules. By sharing information on the signs of separation anxiety as well as ways to prevent and alleviate it, pet parents can help their furry friends cope with not having everyone home all the time.

Whether you're facing a current issue with your pet or just want to learn more about how to keep them happy and healthy, the VBSPCA Pet Care Resource Center has a wide variety of articles and printable infographics available. Visit our website to view our full library.

[vbspca.com/pet-care-resources](https://vbspca.com/pet-care-resources)

**VBSPCA**  
**DECLAWING IS INHUMANE**  
**WHY CATS NEED CLAWS**

Declawing is illegal or considered inhumane in 39 countries and in 8 U.S. cities. The procedure is equivalent to cutting off the first knuckle of a human finger.

- Physical & Muscular Health
- Emotional Wellbeing
- Olfactory Communication
- Self-defense & Confidence

50% of declawed cats develop acute physical complications

33% of declawed cats develop at least 1 behavioral problem

**DECLAWING CAN PRODUCE:**

- Chronic Pain
- Arthritis/Lameness
- Nerve/Tissue Damage
- Ganglions
- Abscesses
- Raw, Red, Abruptly Bone Regrowth
- Osteomyelitis
- Litter Box Issues
- Increased Aggression

**ALTERNATIVES:**  
You can trim your cat's nails, train them to use scratching posts, use positive reinforcement, apply Soft Paws, use a double-sided tape to protect your furniture and break the habit, or use Feliway spray or diffusers.

All VBSPCA feline adopters sign a written agreement that they will not declaw their cat. Visit [vbspca.com](https://vbspca.com) for more information about why cats need claws.

**VBSPCA**  
**SEPARATION ANXIETY**  
**HOW TO HELP PETS COPE**

Separation anxiety can be triggered by changes in routine, moving to a new residence, being abandoned or surrendered, for adoption, or changes in household membership due to life events such as divorce, the death of a family member, or an adult child moving out of the home.

**PREVENTING PROBLEMS**

Even if your pet has not experienced separation anxiety in the past, it is important to prepare them for upcoming changes like returning to the office or leaving for vacation.

- Break up your routine. Try not to follow the exact same sequence every time you leave so your pet is less likely to anticipate your next move.
- Gradually increase the amount of time you're away. This will avoid an abrupt shift from being with your pet 24/7 to being gone for 9-10 hours at one time.
- Keep arrivals and departures calm. Don't make a big deal of your comings and goings. Extended goodbyes and very excited homecomings only increase separation anxiety.
- Keep your pet busy. Provide mentally stimulating toys like puzzle feeders when your pet will be alone. Some pets even enjoy having music or the television on while you are gone.

For additional information, visit [vbspca.com/separation-anxiety](https://vbspca.com/separation-anxiety). If your pet is suffering with severe anxiety, contact your veterinarian.

**VBSPCA**  
**KEEP PETS COOL**  
**HEAT & HYDRATION SAFETY TIPS**

The summer heat can be dangerous to our pets, and it is our job to keep them safe. Use the below tips to make sure your furry friend stays cool on hot summer days.

- Find Shade**  
If you and your pet are outside during the day, make sure to allow your pet plenty of time in the shade. You can also provide your dogs with a kiddie pool filled with cool water or a cool towel to lay down on.
- Protect Their Paws**  
When taking your pet for a walk, check the pavement with your hand before you leave. If you can't leave your finger on the pavement for longer than 3 seconds, it is too hot for your pet! Go for walks in the morning or evening when it's cooler. If you must take your pet out during the day, allow them to walk in the grass.
- Hydration Is Key**  
Pets can get dehydrated quickly, so be sure to provide them with plenty of fresh, cool water. Add some ice cubes for extra fun! If you and your pet will be outside for more than 5 minutes, bring water and a bowl with you.
- Know The Signs Of Heat Stroke**  
Watch for heavy panting, excessive water consumption, and signs of disorientation. Lower their temperature by wetting the top of their head with water and increase air movement with a fan. Consult with the pet.
- Your Pet In The Car, Especially During The Summer Months**

VEHICLE TEMPERATURE
75°
81°
94°
118°
138°
145°

It is incredibly dangerous to our four-legged friends. Visit [vbspca.com](https://vbspca.com) for additional information.

# Innovation

## *Expanding Our Reach*

Humane education is a pillar of the VBSPCA mission, as today's children are the path to a more humane and responsible tomorrow. After losing our face to face youth programs due to the pandemic and in a continued effort to reach more children, we set forth on a new educational quest to strengthen our connection with our youngest and most valuable audience. This fall, we are launching a brand new, interactive educational experience called VBSPCA Animal Heroes. Created as a video arcade, this digital platform offers a series of humane education lessons designed to teach players about pet parenting, pet safety, and animal welfare. This innovative platform will launch this fall, and we are thrilled to be able to reach the minds and hearts of young animal lovers both near and far.

# COMING SOON



The VBSPCA Animal Heroes arcade was paid for in part by an educational grant from Virginia Natural Gas, our Humane Education Match Campaign supporters, and our generous Match Donor Terry O'Quinn.

**We still have \$4,500 left in unmatched funds.**  
Donate today, double your impact, and contribute  
to this innovative educational initiative.

[vbspca.com/match](https://vbspca.com/match)

# Dedication



## FOSTERING SAVES LIVES

**“Fostering animals is a critical part of animal sheltering.”**

VBSPCA Lead Veterinary Assistant Kory McKeel sees a lot of animals with special needs, and not just during work hours. She is known around the office for fostering animals that require extra care.

One of McKeel’s most recent fosters is Pi, a kitten who had to have a partial amputation on one of his back legs. Kory also provided round-the-clock care for Rigby, a puppy who was dropped off at the VBSPCA at just two weeks old and was extremely malnourished and dehydrated. Late last year, there was Moonshine, an abandoned kitten who was found starving and suffering with a badly injured leg inside a warehouse. And let’s not forget about Petunia and Rock, two special needs fosters that are now permanent parts of her family.

“I love fostering special needs animals and helping them get better. They are all so special and I love seeing them grow up and find their forever home. It’s a very rewarding experience.”

McKeel is just one staff member who participates in the VBSPCA foster program, which provides shelter and special care to approximately 1,100 animals every year. Our foster homes help animals not yet ready for the adoption process or shelter environment, like those with medical needs and young puppies and kittens. Fostering animals is a critical part of animal sheltering. Not only do foster families help save the life of the animal being fostered, they have created much needed space in the shelter where the VBSPCA can provide care for another homeless animal in need.



# Collaboration

## Partnerships Celebrating the Role of Pets

The VBSPCA believes there is a powerful connection between people and pets. We see that bond in every adoption. By collaborating with our community, we can celebrate and bring awareness to the human-animal connection.



### Pets Make Life Better



In May we partnered with the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Coastal Virginia for Mental Health Awareness Month to highlight the important role pets can play in our mental and emotional well-being. Both organizations shared information on how pets can help improve the lives of those facing mental health challenges and encouraged the public to share their own stories. We also challenged pet owners to walk a mile with their dog in honor of mental health awareness.

[vbspca.com/pets-make-life-better](http://vbspca.com/pets-make-life-better)

## Junior PICASSO



### YOUTH ART COMPETITION

For Youth Art Month in March, the VBSPCA teamed up with the Virginia Beach Arts Center to inspire young artists and showcase their animal-inspired masterpieces. The Junior Picasso Youth Art Competition invited children ages 6-14 to submit artwork with an animal related theme. Three winners were chosen from three different age groups, and their artwork was displayed at the Virginia Beach Art Center and the VBSPCA in April.



# Associate Highlights



## *A Heartfelt Goodbye*

In June, we bid Happy Tails to our Chief Finance Officer, Vikki Spruill, who retired after 35+ years in nonprofit work. Vikki began her work with the Virginia Beach SPCA in 2015, and she managed grants, facilities, human resources, and finances, but her most treasured experiences were cuddling the cats and dogs. Vikki and her husband Frank often helped with landscaping projects around the shelter, and they fostered animals on occasion. They opened their home to cats, dogs, and even small animals that were being evacuated from the path of a hurricane. Her favorite foster, however, is Reeses who became a permanent member of her family. Reeses is a sweet and opinionated dachshund who was rescued from a local hoarding case in 2019. Vikki was a calming force around the shelter, a quality that was much needed in an environment that can be filled with challenge and sometimes heartache. She will be sorely missed, and we wish her and her family all the best in her retirement.

## *A Warm Welcome*

Meet Laura Poole, the VBSPCA's new Director of Finance and Administration. Laura has never met a dog she doesn't like, which is a trait she claims was passed down from her mother. Laura is originally from Ridgewood, NJ, but she has been in Virginia Beach for over 45 years. She spent the first 20 years of her career in public accounting, including a 3 year stint in New York. Locally, she spent 18 years working for Max Media until landing her "dream job" here at the Virginia Beach SPCA.

Laura first started volunteering with the VBSPCA in 2014. She began walking dogs and slowly became more involved with fostering, and she continues to help with some of our harder to adopt animals. She is also active in our Visiting Paws program, and she has been instrumental in the success of that service. She is passionate about the VBSPCA mission and plans to be involved in any way where her talents and passions can make a difference.





# VBSPCA Party For The Animals

**September 19th**  
3pm-7pm

Join the Virginia Beach SPCA at the Shack's Outdoor Oasis in celebration of the thousands of second chances made possible this year. This family friendly event promises food, drinks, and festivities for all ages, with games and activities for even the littlest animal lovers. Plus - enjoy live music by 757's very own Jesse Chong. Mark your calendars, gather your friends, and get ready to Party for the Animals!

**Show your support for the  
homeless animals of Hampton Roads!**

**PURCHASE TICKETS AT [VBSPCA.COM/PARTY](http://VBSPCA.COM/PARTY)**

Adult, Youth, and Group Tickets Available

*Early Bird Pricing Ends August 31st*



# VBSPCA

VIRGINIA BEACH SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

3040 Holland Road  
Virginia Beach, VA 23453  
phone: (757) 427-0070  
fax: (757) 427-5939  
www.vbspca.com • info@vbspca.com

## HOURS OF OPERATION

### Shelter Adoption Hours:

Monday: Closed  
Tuesday – Sunday: 11:00am – 6:00pm

### Shelter Receiving Hours:

Tuesday – Sunday: 11:00am – 5:00pm  
(by appointment only)

### Clinic Hours:

Monday - Friday: 9:00am – 5:00pm  
Saturday: 9:00am – 1:00pm  
Sunday: Closed

Surgery Drop-Off: 8:00am – 8:45am

Check out [www.vbspca.com](http://www.vbspca.com), where adoptable animals' photos are updated regularly.

## VBSPCA 2021 ANNUAL PARTNERS



PURINA  
Shelter Champions



TOWNE BANK  
The Best Bankers. Hometown Banking.

TERRY  
O'QUINN



TAYLOR  
CONSTRUCTION



US106.1  
SPORTS  
SINCLAIR  
COMMUNICATIONS



Coastal  
VIRGINIA  
Magazine



my  
TVZ  
WTVZ



CORE ASSURANCE  
PARTNERS



EXIT  
EXIT Realty Professionals  
Andy Hubba, Owner/Realtor

Patient First



pet suites  
STAY + PLAY



FRANKLIN  
JOHNSTON  
GROUP



Veterinary Heart Care

We are grateful for the philanthropic businesses and individuals who partner in our mission to create a more compassionate community. For more information, visit [vbspca.com](http://vbspca.com).

