

# YORK COUNTY SPCA PET GAZETTE



SPRING 2024

## MISSION MOMENT:

### A Cat's Sweet Redemption

by DR. NATALIE WEEKES • Shelter Medical Director

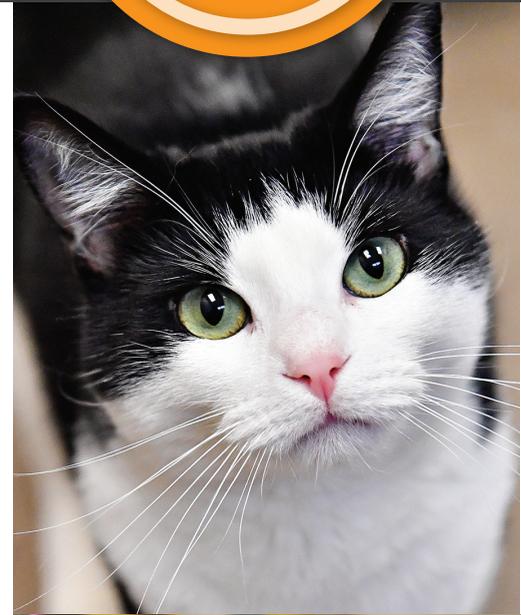
In shelter medicine, we see some of the most interesting and rare medical conditions. Stray animals often have illnesses that go untreated, and owned animals are sometimes relinquished for having difficult or unsolved medical conditions. **Chocolate Crinkle Cookie** is a young stray cat who was brought to us in November 2023. The staff immediately noticed this eight-month-old boy was drinking more water than a typical cat. This is not an unusual sign in animals, as increased drinking can be caused by an array of problems. However, the extent of his excessive water intake was abnormal. For most of the day, he would sit with his head resting on his dish, finishing several water bowls daily.

The medical team began to dive deeper into what might be going on. We conducted routine blood work, urinalysis, and a urine culture to rule out more common causes of increased drinking, such as kidney disease, urinary tract infections, thyroid disease, and diabetes mellitus. All the results came back normal, except for a very diluted urine. The degree of water intake pointed us to a very rare condition in cats known as diabetes insipidus. This is not to be confused with diabetes mellitus, a condition that often requires insulin to treat.

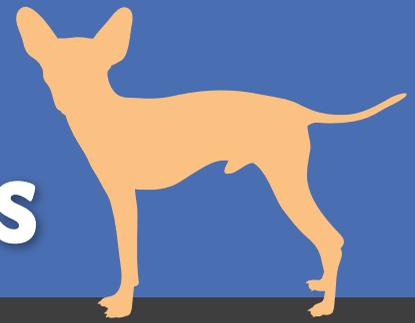
Diabetes insipidus is caused by either the decreased production of antidiuretic hormone (ADH), known as central diabetes insipidus (CDI), or a decreased response from the kidneys to ADH, known as nephrogenic diabetes insipidus (NDI). Antidiuretic hormone allows the kidneys to reabsorb water into the bloodstream, causing concentrated urine. Without ADH, excessive amounts of water will be excreted into the urine and out of the body, therefore dehydrating the patient in the process and causing them to drink more water. A common test for this disease is to give synthetic ADH and desmopressin and closely monitor their response. If they respond favorably, this confirms a diagnosis of central diabetes insipidus.

We started **Chocolate Crinkle Cookie** on desmopressin and measured his drinking, urinating, and how well he could concentrate his urine. His dramatic response was a huge relief to our veterinary team, all of whom adore this sweet boy. His water intake decreased by more than half, he was no longer hanging over his water bowl, and he could concentrate his urine to a normal amount.

Now that he is feeling better, he can be found running around the veterinary wing, getting his kitten energy out! Please stop by to meet **Chocolate Crinkle Cookie** if you want a fun and loving cat. This condition should not compromise his lifespan if he continues to be treated appropriately. His forever family will be very lucky to have this unique boy!



# YOU can help us sustain our progress



by STEVEN MARTINEZ • Executive Director

## York's Biggest Day of Giving is May 2 - 3, 2024.

It's hard to believe that spring is here, and we are gearing up for one of our favorite days of the year at the shelter – Give Local York! **Give Local York is York's biggest day of giving where the community joins together to make a BIG difference for hundreds of York County nonprofit organizations. This year, Give Local York begins on Thursday, May 2, and ends on Friday, May 3 (9 PM - 9 PM.) The funds raised on this important day are critical to support our lifesaving mission.**

Give Local enables us to take advantage of matching funds and stretch pool dollars. The stretch pool comprises funds raised by the Give Local York team and is distributed to participating nonprofits. This year, the stretch pool's distribution is based on each organization's number of unique donors. Last year, the **York County SPCA** had the second-highest number of individual donors of all nonprofits participating in the event - **we need your help to be number one!** Your support can help us top the list and show the strength of our community. Please spread the word about our lifesaving mission to friends, family, colleagues, etc., and encourage them to support us during this day of giving.

**Because of you, we reached a 94.2% save rate in 2023. That means we are saving every pet that can be saved.** This lifesaving milestone would not have been possible without our community of supporters. Volunteering, donating, and spreading the word about our mission makes a huge difference in what our organization can accomplish.

Last year, during Give Local, because of YOUR support, we raised more than \$75,000 - mostly from small gifts from individual donors. **This year, our goal is to reach 600 individual donors and raise \$100,000.** Your support is crucial in achieving this. Every dollar and every donor directly impacts the lives of the animals we care for, bringing them one step closer to a happy ending. **In fact - more than 70% of our annual operating income comes from gifts from individual supporters.**

**Together, we can sustain our progress and ensure continued happy endings for pets in York County.**

**Visit our Give Local York campaign page: [ycsPCA.org/givelocalyork](https://ycsPCA.org/givelocalyork)**

**If you would like to contribute an offline gift to count towards GLY, please follow the instructions on the remittance envelope.**

### ADMINISTRATION

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Communications Director: *Kristen Dempwolf*

Shelter Operations Director: *Kari Herchelroth*

Finance & HR Director: *Elizabeth Loucks*

Clinic Medical Director: *Dr. Kimberly Mann*

Director of Philanthropy: *Chad Myers*

Shelter Medical Director: *Dr. Natalie Weekes*

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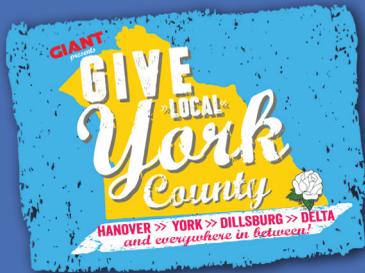
*Nancy Brougner (Emeritus), Michelle Frye, Vicki Glatfelter, Kelly Kelch, Kathy King (Emeritus), Christian Miller, Valerie Miller DVM (Emeritus), Keith Noll, John Porter, Teresa Shultz-Fogelman, Kevin Schmidt, DVM, Tricia Slagel*

# Give Local York is Back!

**THURSDAY, MAY 2 TO FRIDAY, MAY 3 (9pm-9pm)**

Starting at 9pm on Thursday May 2, please visit [ycspca.org/givelocalyork](http://ycspca.org/givelocalyork) and donate to our Give Local York campaign. Giving ends at 9pm on May 3.

In 2023, your generosity helped us reach more than 500 donors and raise \$75,000. This year, we have an even bigger goal in mind of 600 individual donors and \$100,000 raised - we can't do it without YOU! Every dollar raised supports our lifesaving mission.



Visit our campaign page to donate on **GIVE LOCAL YORK DAY!**



**SAVE THE DATE!**

## IT'S A PAW-TY!

**FRIDAY, MAY 3 FROM 4 - 8pm  
AT THE YORK COUNTY SPCA**

On Give Day, we will be holding a Community PAW-ty at the shelter to rally together in support of animals in need right here in York County! We invite you to join us for an evening of fun festivities for the whole family, including:

- *Food Trucks*
- *Face Painting & Kids Activities*
- *Doggy Fashion Show*
- *Paw Painting with Our Cats*
- *Open Browsing to Find a New Furry Friend*
- *And... so much MORE!*



**Scan for more info!**



## CLINIC CORNER:

# The Unicorn Among Cats: A Male Tortoiseshell

by KIMBERLY MANN, VMD • Clinic Medical Director

In 2023, the spay/neuter clinic performed 11,862 spay/neuter surgeries, 7,687 of which were free-roaming community cats. By treating this many animals in our community every year, it's true that we see all kinds of unusual findings during surgery. However, on January 29, 2024, **we had a truly rare gem visit our clinic.** A 12-pound dilute tortoiseshell cat was brought in for our Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program. This cat was trapped by a community member and brought to us for neutering and vaccination. When we sedated the cat, the staff was surprised and delighted to find he was a male!

A tortoiseshell (or tortie) cat has a coat of two colors - either black and orange or, in the case of a "dilute tortie," grey and buff. Tortie cats are nearly 100% female due to the genetics involved in determining coat color. The gene that determines coat color is located on the X chromosome. Females (XX) have two X chromosomes, so they might inherit one black gene from one parent and one orange gene from the other and therefore have a tortoiseshell coat. Males (XY) only have one X chromosome, so they only have either the gene for black OR the gene for orange. Dilute tortoiseshell cats also have a separate "dilute color gene" found on a separate chromosome which changes their black or orange fur to grey and buff.

So, if a cat needs two X chromosomes to be a tortoiseshell cat, and males only have one X chromosome, how did we end up with a dilute tortie male in our clinic? **This cat is special and unique because he is a 1 in 10,000 occurrence.** Rarely, there is a chromosomal abnormality that causes a male cat to be born with two X chromosomes (XXY). He outwardly appears like any other male due to his Y chromosome. Still, he also has the possibility of being a tortoiseshell due to the two X chromosomes. XXY cats live normal lives, and their health is not affected by their genetic anomaly. Because they are so rare, cat enthusiasts find them unique and special, and they garner extra attention.

The grey and buff dilute tortie cat that visited our clinic in January was just busy living his outdoor life, and the community member who trapped him had no idea what a rare find he was! Because he was a feral, unsocialized cat, he was routinely neutered and vaccinated against rabies before returning to his outdoor home.

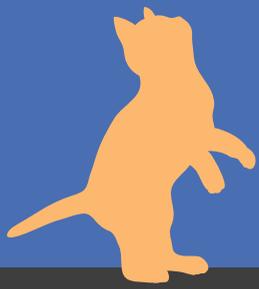
*For more information on the services the York County Spay/Neuter Clinic offers or our Trap-Neuter-Return program, please visit our website at [www.ycspca.org](http://www.ycspca.org).*



Male dilute tortoiseshell cat



Held by Dr. Mann,  
Clinic Medical Director



## FIELD REPORT:

# The Cat Who Wobbled Into Everyone's Hearts

by RACHEL RITCHEY • Content Creator

A tiny black-and-white kitten with big, captivating yellow eyes came in through our Shelter-Neuter-Return (SNR) program on July 27, 2023. The goal of this program is to provide temporary shelter and medical treatment for community cats until they are healthy enough to be released back to their outdoor homes.

This sweet cat was being taken care of at our shelter, and **Animal Care and Facilities Technician Cole** immediately noticed he was unique. **"My first thoughts when I saw him were that he was cute and tiny. He was sweet, so I started to pet him and hold him while I cleaned his trap. I saw him wobbling around when I set him down on the ground. He couldn't stand up or walk very well,"** Cole says.

After our veterinarians examined him, they diagnosed him with a neurological condition called **"cerebellar hypoplasia,"** or more commonly called **"CH."** This occurs when the brain's cerebellum, which controls fine motor skills and balance, fails to develop properly. Fearing he wouldn't be able to fend for himself if he was re-released outdoors, Cole approached our feline foster & rescue coordinator to ask if he could foster him. She shared his concerns about the cat and agreed that time in a dedicated foster home would be greatly beneficial. Due to his gait, Cole lovingly named him **"Mr. Wobbles."**

Once home, Cole set him up inside a pen with water, food, a litterbox, toys, and a blanket. Initially, he would flip the water and food bowls when he tried to use them and fall when trying to use his litter box. Cole raised his bowls and got him a covered litter box, and thankfully, he adjusted very well to these changes.

After a few nights passed, to his surprise, Cole woke up to Mr. Wobbles cuddling in bed with him. Mr. Wobbles was curious enough to start climbing out of his pen to explore. For his safety, Cole took down the pen and allowed him to interact with his other pets. He started acting like a normal kitten, attempting to romp and play with the other pets.



Although Mr. Wobbles acclimated well, determining the best medication to control his seizures, which he is more susceptible to with CH, has involved a lot of trial and error. After monitoring and blood work, Mr. Wobbles is finally on a medication that works well for him.

Cole ultimately decided Mr. Wobbles had to become a permanent member of his fur family and finalized his adoption in January 2024.

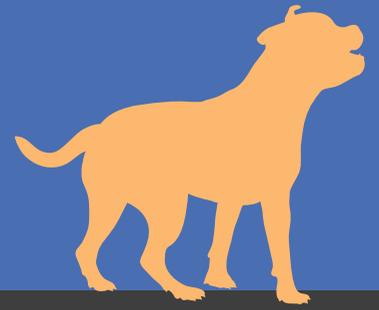
Let Mr. Wobbles' story be a testament to the cliché **"Never judge a book by its cover."** He may have complex medical needs from looking outward, but he has made the best companion Cole could have asked for.



## FOSTER FABLES:

# Sugar Paws

## A Diabetic Dog's Journey!



by STEVEN HALSTEAD • Canine Foster & Rescue Coordinator

In the sheltering world, we often hear stories of resilience and transformation, but **Alice's** journey is truly special. Alice, a timid and scared stray dog, found her way into our hearts on August 12, 2023. She came to us seeking refuge, unsure of what the future held.

Recognizing her need for love and care, we placed Alice in a foster home on September 10, 2023. This family not only adored her but also dedicated themselves to helping her overcome her separation anxiety. **Through patience and affection, they provided a safe space for Alice to blossom into the loving companion she was meant to be.**

However, Alice faced another challenge on her path to happiness. After noticing she was drinking and urinating more than normal, our veterinary team discovered she was diabetic. They performed blood work and a urinalysis, both indicating diabetes mellitus. **Shelter Medical Director, Dr. Weekes**, started Alice on insulin to manage her blood glucose levels. Alice's foster family remained steadfast during this process, fully embracing the additional care and medical treatment Alice required until she could find her forever home.

Her foster says, **"Although she had some medical needs, we knew she would make a wonderful companion for a family! She loves people and LOVES being LOVED! We are so happy that we got to be a part of her journey into a furever family. She was our first foster, and she helped us to understand the importance of fostering!"** Despite this additional hurdle, Alice's spirit remained unbroken.

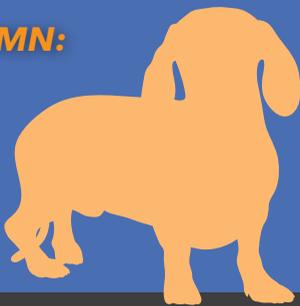
As time passed, Alice's warmth and affection touched the hearts of everyone she met. She had a unique gift of making strangers feel like friends, spreading joy wherever she went. **Her loving nature became her most endearing quality.**

Finally, on February 9, Alice's journey came full circle as she found her forever home. Alice's new family welcomed her with open arms, ready to provide her with the love and care she deserved.

Today, Alice is thriving in her forever home. Her story serves as a reminder of the incredible resilience of animals and the transformative power of fostering. As we celebrate Alice's journey, let us also remember the countless other animals awaiting their own happy endings. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of animals in need, one heartwarming tale at a time. Alice's adopter says **"My son and I adopted Alice just recently. She is just perfect! Smart, sweet, silly & beautiful... she is exactly what we were looking for!"**

THE GOOD DOG ADVICE COLUMN:

# Preventing Dog Bites



Deb Byloff and Cathy Hivner have trained dogs for two decades and have partnered with the York County SPCA for the last 16 years, helping to teach our community to understand their pups better. Both work and train their dogs at Papillon Dog Training Academy.

by DEB BYLOFF & CATHY HIVNER • Papillon Dog Training Academy



National Dog Bite Prevention Week is April 7 - 13, 2024, occurring the second week of April annually. According to the **American Veterinary Medical Association**, “even the cuddliest, fuzziest, sweetest pet can bite if provoked.”

National 2021 data shows that Pennsylvania ranks among the top ten states reporting dog bites.

More than half of the 4 million people bitten by dogs each year are children. Sadly, many of these bites are more severe. An astounding 77 percent of dog bites are from family or friends’ dogs. Fortunately, there are ways to prevent many of these bites.

## KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE AROUND DOGS

Adults should always be present and vigilant when a young child and a dog are together. Never leave a small child unsupervised with a dog. Teach children from an early age to respect dogs and interact with them appropriately. Teach them to leave dogs alone while they are eating, sleeping, and chewing bones. Coach children to always ask for permission before petting a dog. When petting dogs, use gentle touches and never pull their tail, hit them, etc. Instill in them to never approach a strange dog. Regrettably, unfortunate incidents involving dog bites do occur due to the quick and unpredictable nature of children, making it challenging to always maintain constant supervision.

## RECOGNIZE BITE WARNING SIGNS

Learning more about dog body language is one of the best ways to prevent bites. It is unusual for a bite to occur without some warning in the dog’s body language. For instance, tail wagging is not always friendly. In some dogs or situations, it can indicate nervousness. Signs of an anxious dog may include: **yawning, putting ears back, stiffening of the tail or body, lowering of the head, whale eye, and growling.** Many people dislike their dogs growling, but that growl is an important sign that the dog is uncomfortable, and you should leave it be.

When a dog shows signs of consistent anxious or aggressive behavior, it’s best to seek the help of a positive reinforcement trainer. Harsh physical punishment may suppress a behavior, but it does not change what the dog feels and may increase negative behavior in some dogs, including biting. Some dogs demonstrate reactive or aggressive behavior while out in public. A knowledgeable trainer can teach how to exercise a dog enjoyably in a way that keeps others safe and ultimately keeps the dog from becoming a bite statistic.

For a full list of references, please visit our blog post of the same title on our website [www.ycspca.org](http://www.ycspca.org).

TINY PAWS, BIG HEARTS:

# The Power of Fostering Felines

by RACHEL DIAZ • Feline Foster & Rescue Coordinator



Anna Riccardo



Alexis Joop

In 2023, we sent 486 cats and kittens to foster - each number representing a life that was cared for, cherished, and loved. Many of those cats came in during **kitten season** which is right around the corner as spring approaches. **Kitten season** is the time of year when kittens are born in masses by community cats, with many finding their way to the shelter with the help of community members.

**Anna Riccardo** and **Alexis Joop**, two of our volunteer feline fosters, share their stories and what this critical role means to them:

**Q: When did you know you wanted to start fostering cats?**

**ANNA:** When my two old male cats passed away within a year of each other, I found the Kitten Lady on social media and started following her journey of fostering. I fell in love with the idea of doing exactly what she did. When my schedule finally allowed for me to foster, I jumped at the chance!

**ALEXIS:** When I moved into my very first apartment, there were about 13 community cats that were reproducing. One day, I happened to look under the tires of my vehicle before leaving for work, and there was this tiny, fuzzy face staring up at me. I searched for a mama nearby, and there were none to be found. I immediately took it inside and called my vet, who walked me through the steps of bottle feeding a neonatal kitten. Now named Macy, she currently lives with one of my best friends and to this day, when I call her in my "kitten voice," she remembers me.

**Q: What does kitten season mean to you?**

**ANNA:** **Kitten season** is the craziest time of year for us fosters! It's generally nonstop, with mamas and babies coming in daily. However, my daughters love it so much because they get to cuddle the smallest kitties and help them grow. It becomes exhausting, but we persist to help as many mothers and kittens as we can.

**ALEXIS:** It means gear up for endless lifesaving help. I have so much excitement when it comes time because I know that I can help make a difference in the lives of our tiniest felines.

**Q: What is something fostering cats has taught you?**

**ANNA:** It has taught me and my family so much! Patience, persistence, how to care for mama cats vs. kittens vs. adults, all different in their needs. It has made me more compassionate for all types of animals too.

**ALEXIS:** Just like people, all animals have unique personalities with their own likes and dislikes. Through fostering, I learned about respecting the boundaries of the animal and working to gain trust. All pets have ways of communicating happiness, fear, and uneasiness. Fostering a kitten or adult cat entails learning about their personality and it really comes in handy when the shelter pairs them with a potential adopter.

**Apply today to foster:**



**KITTEN SEASON IS COMING:**

# Don't Be a "Kit-napper"

by KASIE MATTHEWS • Client Services Counselor

As **kitten season** approaches, we receive many inquiries from community members finding stray kittens, and their first reaction is to bring them into the shelter. We know they have the best intentions for them to receive love and care, however, there is key information you must collect before making this decision. The ultimate goal is to keep kittens and mothers together. Here are our best tips to avoid being a "**kit-napper**":

- **Monitor** - If you find a litter of kittens, don't be so quick to scoop them up. First, observe "**abandoned kittens**" from a distance to see if mom is caring for them. Mother cats will typically hide their kittens and leave them alone for long periods of time to hunt. Kittens under eight weeks should remain with mom because her milk provides essential nutrients and antibodies for them to grow into healthy cats.
- **When to Intervene** - If you do not see a mother cat return after **24 hours** (or the mother is deceased), it is time to step in to help. Neonatal kittens (under four weeks old) are especially at risk because they cannot survive on their own and require specialized care. If kittens are under two weeks old (especially if their eyes are still closed), you will want to step in sooner after **6-8 hours** if no mom is present.
- **Consider Fostering** - Please consider caring for these kittens yourself or seeing if a neighbor may be able to help. Most pet stores carry kitten milk replacement and bottles. Please **DO NOT** use regular cow's milk - it does not have the proper nutrients for them and may cause adverse health effects.
- **Call the Shelter** - If the mother has not returned and you cannot care for the kittens, you can bring them to the shelter. It is best practice to call and inquire prior to this to alert the staff of the situation. Shelter staff try to immediately find a partner foster or rescue caregiver, as most shelters do not have overnight staff to give neonatal kittens the round-the-clock care they need. Also, underaged kittens cannot be vaccinated, therefore they are more susceptible to illnesses in a shelter environment.
- It is so important to **Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)** the mother cat to lower the number of unwanted litters in the community.
- There are **special circumstances** for when to step in sooner to help kittens: if they are in immediate danger (such as traffic or predators) and/or if they are visibly sick or injured.



**If you find community kittens and have any questions for the best next steps, call us at 717-764-6109 or email us at [info@ycspca.org](mailto:info@ycspca.org).**

**In Loving Memory of Tater Tot,  
YORK COUNTY SPCA MASCOT & OFFICE CAT**



With heavy hearts and tearful eyes, we announce the passing of our beloved office cat and York County SPCA mascot, Tater Tot.

After nearly 14 years of bringing joy, comfort, and companionship to all who crossed his path, Tater succumbed to an illness on Tuesday, March 5, 2024.

Tater's journey began when he arrived at the shelter as a tiny, curious kitten. His demeanor immediately captured the hearts of the staff and volunteers, and it became evident that Tater was destined for a unique role within the YCSPCA community.

From his humble beginnings, Tater swiftly ascended to the esteemed position of office cat, making our administrative offices his kingdom. He was one of the YCSPCA's longest-tenured employees. Thank you, Tater, for all the emotional support and love you provided not only our staff, but also our volunteers and all who met you. You are dearly missed.

**Langan  
Group  
Financial**

**We would like to thank Langan Financial Group for sponsoring our 2024 Donor Open House! Thank you for supporting our continued mission to help pets in York County and beyond!**



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*Above: Langan team (left) and honorary office rescue dog, Zoey (right)*

# ADOPTION SNAPSHOTS



**Bear** - Bear was our longest feline resident at the time he was adopted, waiting a total of 310 days.

"We absolutely love Bear. He is such a happy kitty, and we are so grateful that things are working out with him. He is very playful and gallops to his food dish when it's feeding time." - Julie



**Sampson** - "Sampson is an absolute LOVE. He has a very funny personality. He has all of us wrapped around his paw. He is so loved and happy. We are grateful to have found him during the adoption event." - Rebecca



**Georgie Porgie** - "He loves laying on my lap and sleeping next to me in bed. Georgie is adapting to his new home quite well, as well as his "brother," Figgy (11-year-old chihuahua mix). He is such a sweet boy. I am so glad he is part of the family." - Debbie



**Herc** - "Herc is doing great! He is such a loving and appreciative dog. He loves his new home, my two kids, and me. He's the perfect dog!" - David



**Lacey** - "Lacey is doing great! She's definitely a cuddle bug when she wants it. She will come up and give you a boop until you pet her. She loves to sit around and watch TV with us and just overall is an amazing addition to our family." - Shakira



**Strawberry** - "Strawberry (now Mylah) sleeps in the sunshine behind the sofa during the morning, then lies on the carpet watching TV in the evening. She also loves chewing on cardboard and her binkies!" - Maisie



of York County

**Brougner Companion  
Animal Shelter**  
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York, PA 17406  
[www.ycspca.org](http://www.ycspca.org)

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## IN MEMORY OF



### Phoebe

*"Phoebe was my first foster dog, and she trained me well! She loved her mealtimes and all kinds of treats. Her other favorite thing was blankets.*

*Sometimes she crawled under them herself or would bring me a blanket to cover her. Her nickname was "the Queen," therefore, we had to capture her in this red robe!*

*I'm so glad I had the opportunity to foster, and then adopt, Phoebe!"*

*- Selisa*

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