

CLEVELAND
ANIMAL
PROTECTIVE
LEAGUE

Pet Patter

December 2025

Letter from CEO pg. 2

Dog's Day Out pg. 3

Fur Ball 2025 pg. 6

Freddie Finds Somebody to Love

They say you can't choose your family. But for shelter animals—and cats in particular—that isn't exactly true. Blue Sky chose his wisely and created his own happily-ever-after.

Ericka wanted her baby daughter, Amara, to grow up with a pet. She initially considered getting a dog. But, Ericka, her boyfriend Alex, and Amara live in a townhouse without a backyard. So, she decided a cat was a better choice.

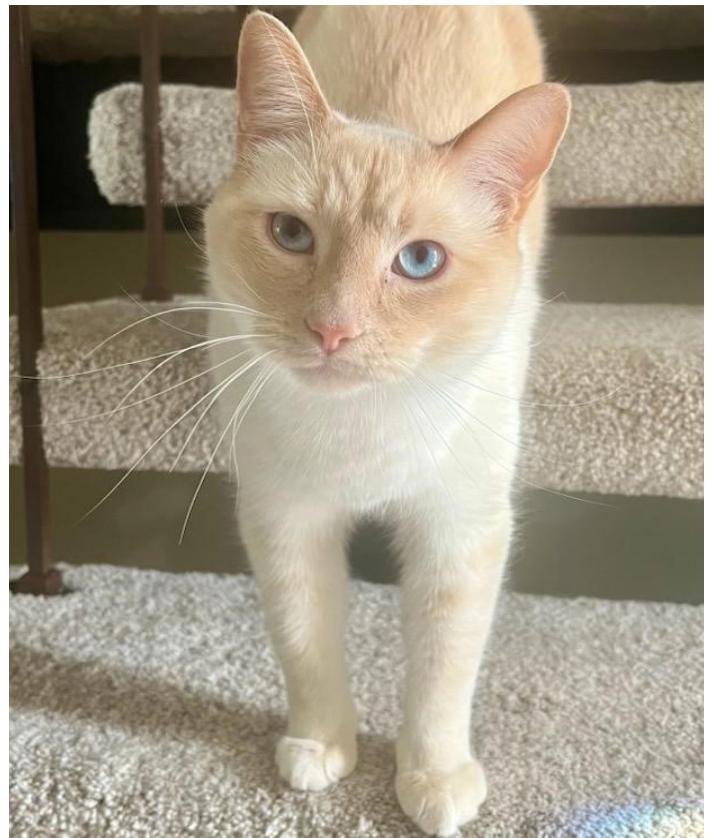
Alex had grown up with Siamese cats. Though it had been some time since he'd had one, Alex liked their appearance, and how vocal they can be. So, when Blue Sky, a Siamese kitten, became available on the APL website, Ericka, Alex, and Amara went to meet him.

Blue Sky and his three brothers had been brought to the APL along with their mom, Kelly, by a Good Samaritan. Blue Sky appeared to be a cream- or flame-point Siamese – the only one of the litter. Named for their coloring, these Siamese cats have beautiful cream-colored fur with reddish-orange markings on their faces, ears, legs, and tails. Flame-points are generally thought of as loving, social, and attention-seeking cats.

APL staff might disagree with that generalization, though. In fact, they cautioned Ericka and Alex that Blue Sky was shy and a bit afraid. They told Ericka not to be surprised if he didn't want to be petted.

But when Blue Sky met Ericka, he knew. As Ericka approached him, fear and shyness disappeared. He flopped over on his back, requesting her attention and some additional petting. Blue Sky had chosen his new family.

Blue Sky was renamed Freddie, after Freddie Mercury of Queen fame. The name was quite appropriate since he did, after all, find somebody to love! Freddie made himself at home immediately. He sits at the back door and trades stories with the neighborhood feral cats.



Freddie settling into his new home!

He watches the family parrot, too, sitting near her cage as she calls, "here, kitty, kitty." While Freddie likes to play with his toys (he does backflips for his long bendy stick), his favorite thing is to spend time with his family, getting and giving love.

Freddie and Amara bonded immediately. When it's time to wake Amara, Ericka tells Freddie that "it's time to get the baby up," and Freddie is right at her side, talking outside Amara's door, ready for duty. In some ways, Ericka reflects, he is more like a dog than a cat.

Continued on page 8

Bennie's BLURB

Letter from the President & CEO

When people visit the Cleveland APL's adoptable animals, they often have no idea how much intentional work goes into keeping their minds and spirits healthy while they wait for their new homes. Behind every wagging tail and contented purr is a team of people dedicated to making sure each animal's time with us is filled not only with care, but also with as much comfort and as little stress as possible.

As you may know, animals are staying in shelters longer than in past years. Economic and housing challenges have slowed pet adoptions, especially for large dogs, and many of the animals arriving at our doors have medical needs that require longer treatment and recovery times. Because of this, providing physical and behavioral enrichment is no longer a nice thing to do; it's an essential part of our work every single day.

Life in a shelter, no matter how welcoming the facility or compassionate the staff, can be stressful for animals. They're in an unfamiliar environment, surrounded by new sights, sounds, and smells. For some, we're the nicest place they've ever lived, others may take a little time to adjust, and then there are those who struggle with shelter life and are at risk of developing stress-related behavioral and physical health issues. This means our top priority must always be to get them out of cages into loving homes as quickly as we can. But while they wait, providing them with enrichment—which consists of activities that engage their senses, encourage natural behaviors, and offer an outlet for anxiety and boredom—is critical to their well-being.

For a dog, enrichment might mean going for a walk, playing with a puzzle feeder that makes them "work" for their treats, or simply having a volunteer or staff member sit nearby offering quiet companionship. For a cat, it could be a climbing shelf, a cozy box to explore, or a "hunt"

for hidden treats. These experiences do far more than pass the time—they also help animals to stay curious and emotionally balanced.

At the Cleveland APL, we're always looking for new ways to improve the shelter experience for the animals in our care. Our dedicated, four-person Animal Enrichment & Wellbeing team proactively coordinates enrichment activities, supported by staff and volunteers. They create individualized plans for animals who are showing signs of shelter stress and are at risk of developing related behavioral and medical health issues. Our Wish List for donations includes many of the toys and supplies that make this work possible. We ask our foster care volunteers to give stressed animals a break from shelter life by taking them home for a short period. And, in this issue of Pet Patter, you'll read about our new Dog Day Out program, which launched this summer. It not only adds an exciting new enrichment opportunity for our dogs but also helps them to get adopted.

Enrichment reminds us that every animal is an individual, with their own needs, preferences, and personality. Thanks to you and your generous support, we can do more than give our animals the safety, food, and medical care they need. We can also provide them with more individualized care that honors their dignity and makes their stay with us as positive and comfortable as possible while they wait for what they really need—a new home and family to love.

Sharon Harvey
and Bennie



Visit the APL

Make sure to check our website at ClevelandAPL.org for the most up-to-date open information. Hours may be subject to change.

Animal Resource Center Hours:

Monday–Saturday: 10:00 AM–5:30 PM
Sunday–Closed

Community Pet Clinic Hours:

Monday–Friday: 9:00 AM–5:30 PM
Saturday & Sunday: Closed

Adoption Hours:

Monday–Friday: 11:00 AM–6:00 PM
Saturday: 10:00 AM–5:00 PM
Sunday: 12:00 PM–4 PM

Project CARE Hours:

Monday–Friday: 10:00 AM–5 PM
Saturday: By appointments

affoGATO Cat Cafe (Cat Lounge)

761 Starkweather Ave, Cleveland, OH 44113
440-941-5130

Visit www.affogatocatcafe.com to make a reservation.



Dog's Day Out is a Tail-Wagging Success!

The APL introduced a new initiative this year, Dog's Day Out, a feel-good program that gives shelter pups a much-needed break and a chance to shine beyond the shelter walls.

Based on the success of similar shelter programs across the country and the high demand from the community, the APL launched its own program to the public in March 2025. Dog's Day Out allows people who are not already APL volunteers to "check out" a dog for the day and treat them to an afternoon of fun. Whether it's a walk around the neighborhood, a hike in the Metroparks, or just lounging at a dog-friendly café, these short getaways give dogs valuable stress relief. They also provide priceless exposure to potential adopters.

And Cleveland has responded enthusiastically. The program has already seen 292 field trips taken with 88 community members volunteering and 28 APL volunteer veterans participating. Volunteers have enjoyed the program so much that some of them have become repeat participants. The demand is so high, sessions are booking out weeks in advance.

Dog's Day Out isn't just about fresh air and fun, it's changing lives.

So many dogs have found new, loving homes (sometimes even with their field trip volunteers). Outfitted in our signature purple APL vests that read "Adopt Me," these pups proudly show off their personalities as they explore the world outside the shelter. Thanks to the extra attention and visibility, the dogs in the program have seen a 97% adoption rate!

"The outpouring of support for our Dog's Day Out program has been incredible," said Hanna Harris, Shelter Volunteer Coordinator. "It has been amazing to see how excited the community is to connect with the APL, whether it's people who've always wanted a dog but can't have one, or dog owners who just love giving our shelter dogs an adventure. Local businesses like Luca's Barkery and Terrestrial Brewing have also been wonderfully supportive and love seeing our dogs out and about. It has truly been a community effort, and I couldn't be more grateful."

And we know our dogs are grateful, too! For more information on Dog's Day Out and how to get involved, visit <https://clevelandapl.org/dogs-day-out>.



Trevor takes a hike with one of our amazing community volunteers. He is now adopted!

2024 Volunteers of the Year



(From left to right): Volunteer Manager Danielle Begalla representing Rose Donohoo, Jill Moore, Kristina Donets, Jaymie Shanker, Peggy Schaffer, and APL President & CEO Sharon Harvey

At our annual volunteer appreciation event at BrewDog on July 9, the Cleveland APL celebrated its 2024 Volunteers of the Year: Kristina Donets of North Ridgeville, Rose Donohoo of Cleveland, Jill Moore of Lakewood, Peggy Schaffer of Avon Lake, and Jaymie Shanker of Shaker Heights. Each was honored for extraordinary service to the APL and its animals—Kristina for fostering bottle baby kittens, Rose for fostering dogs with behavioral challenges, Jill for her leadership and dedication on the cat adoptions floor, Peggy for her years of compassionate service with shelter dogs and Project CARE, and Jaymie for her essential work in the Development Department.

In 2024, 1,355 volunteers contributed more than 138,698 hours—the equivalent of 66 full-time employees! A big thank you to BrewDog for hosting the event in their dog-friendly indoor/outdoor space, and to all our incredible volunteers for your dedication and commitment to the Cleveland APL. We could not do what we do without you!

To learn more about joining our volunteer or foster care team, contact Volunteer Manager Danielle Begalla at (216) 377-1627 or dbegalla@clevelandapl.org.



Frannie's Story: From Foster to Family

In the Words of her adopter and APL foster volunteer, Pam



Fran enjoys her new backyard.

The minute she walked in the house
I could see she was a gal of distinction
A real good house guest
Housebroken, cuddle time
Then she took over the couch that used to be mine!
So let me get right to the point
I don't share my couch with every dog I see
Hey there, Frannie
Won't you share YOUR couch with me?

— To the music of Big Spender, from the show Sweet Charity

Why begin Fran's story with my words to a Broadway show tune? Because when she became my foster, Fran quickly learned that Sunday was Broadway music day and there would be singing. Then I quickly learned that Fran would take over MY couch!

Our story didn't begin with Fran as my foster. I originally met her in 2020, while volunteering as a dog walker at the APL. She was six at the time, and I got to know her on our walks and then on field trips. Fran became one of my regular field trippers until she was adopted. Two years passed, then one day while on my dog walking shift, I spotted a dog that looked familiar.

I had to look again. Is that Fran? It was. She was back at the APL, so that week, we picked up where we left off and started going on field trips, again.

Then the APL team asked if I would be interested in fostering Fran. As soon as Fran walked into my house, I'm pretty sure she knew she was home right away, but it took longer for Fran to convince me! While Frannie was my foster, we had many adventures together and became best buddies. One of my favorite memories was the first time we visited my niece who was battling cancer. Fran and Lexi hit it off right away, and when it started to rain, Lexi got an umbrella to keep Fran dry! Meanwhile, I was left standing in the rain with Lexi's dad and grandma. It was clear to us who was the VIP that day! Lexi asked if Fran could stay overnight and I explained that Frannie was my foster and I would need to adopt her before she could stay. Lexi said, "Aunt Pam, you should adopt Frannie. Then she can stay overnight with me!" I'm pretty sure this was a set up that both Lexi and Fran had planned!

Everywhere we go, Fran makes friends. She loves being around people and is great with kids. My friends call her Sugar, which is a perfect nickname for such a sweet, loving girl. One of my friends enjoys her visits so much that Frannie is her guest for overnight visits a couple times a month, which allows me to continue taking APL dogs on field trips without feeling guilty! I adopted Fran at age nine, and now at 11, she has really mellowed, so we adjust our lifestyle to what works best for Fran. It may have taken me a while to decide to adopt Fran, but now I can't imagine life without her!



Fran loves playing with her favorite ball.



Barbara Reitzloff, APL Volunteer, assisted in the writing of Freddie's story.
Frannie's story was written by APL Foster Volunteer and Frannie's adopter, Pam Cerio.

Thank You Fox 8 for Hosting the Dick Goddard APL Telethon

Community News

The 11th annual Dick Goddard APL Telethon aired on Fox 8 on Wednesday, September 10. This fantastic event was hosted by Fox 8 personalities and animal lovers Natalie Herbick, Todd Meany, and Kenny Crumpton.

Between 6:00 AM and 7:30 PM., Fox 8 viewers saw vignettes that featured some of the amazing animals who were in our care. The segments showcased the meaningful and life-saving work that takes place at the Cleveland APL every day. The event inspired viewers to make donations to help the animals who are cared for by the Cleveland APL.

We are happy to report that more than \$189,000 was raised to support our mission and life-saving work! A total of 134 people gave their time as volunteers—116 of whom staffed our phone bank and spoke to the animal-loving viewers who called in to donate.

We are so grateful to Fox 8, Natalie Herbick, Todd Meany, Kenny Crumpton, and the sponsors who made this wonderful event possible. A special thank you to our Presenting Sponsor, Cross Country Mortgage.

Tune in next year for the 12th annual Dick Goddard APL Telethon in the fall!

Thank you to our sponsors!



**CROSSCOUNTRY
MORTGAGE**

Kaulig Giving



(From left to right): Natalie Herbick from Fox 8; Sharon Harvey, APL President & CEO; Judy Hunter, Vice President of Philanthropy and Communications; Denel Cherry from Fox 8; and Cristy Aul, APL Events Manager

Purchase Your 2026 APL Calendar Now!

We are excited to announce the arrival of the Cleveland APL's 2026 Annual Calendar! Again, this year, we let you pick the final "Pet of the Month" in the calendar. After the voting of the top 10 runners-up took place, we were happy to announce that Skye's beautiful photo received the most votes and is featured in the calendar as "Pet of the Month" in August.

The calendar makes a great gift, especially for the holidays! To order your copy, visit our website or visit our animal resource center in Tremont. To preview the calendar, visit clevelandapl.org/pet-calendar/.

Don't miss the chance for your pet to be featured in the 2027 calendar! Enter online at www.ClevelandAPL.org or call 216-377-1628 for more information. Also, look for the calendar contest voting again next year on our website!



Bisous on the cover of the 2026 APL Calendar!

Special Events

Fur Ball 2025: Shake, Rattle & Roll Over

More than 400 guests helped us to raise \$358,000 to benefit the APL's Second Chance Program during the Cleveland Animal Protective League's annual gala, which was held both in-person and virtually on Saturday, November 1!

Our host, Monica Robins from WKYC; our President & CEO, Sharon Harvey; and our auctioneer, Karolyn Isenhardt welcomed guests to the InterContinental Hotel for the most tail-wagging event of the year.

In-person attendees had a great time at the many food stations as well as bidding on fabulous items in our live and silent auctions, while virtual guests were able to bid on auction items and enjoy our Fur Ball program from the comfort of their own home. All guests also learned about some very special animals whose lives were saved because of the medical care and expertise the Second Chance Program allows us to provide.



Cannoli, our VIP

Cannoli, a two-year-old Pit Bull mix, was the night's VIP (Very Important Pooch). She came to the Cleveland APL in desperate need of medical care after being abandoned without food, water, or shelter. Severely underweight and suffering from infected wounds and heartworm disease, Cannoli received the lifesaving specialty treatment she needed thanks to generous donors to the Second Chance Program. Today, she's healthy, happy, and thriving—a beautiful reminder of how compassion can transform a life.

Also featured in the videos were Plankton, a two-year-old cat who arrived with a broken leg and a terrible upper respiratory infection; Butch, a seven-month-old Cane Corso puppy who suffered from a debilitating leg fracture; and T-Bo, a senior cat rescued by a Good Samaritan who faced dental disease, a painful tongue ulcer, and early kidney disease. Each of these resilient animals received the specialty surgeries and care they needed to recover and thrive, made possible through the Second Chance Program and the dedication of the Cleveland APL team.

A committed group of APL volunteers works on the gala all year long. A special thank you to our Committee Chairs: Auction Procurement Co-Chairs Jen and Moe Maxwell; Auction Presentation Co-Chairs Angela DeMuesy and Katie Zehr; Auction Operations Co-Chairs Barbara Reitzloff and Sabah Bhat; and Decorations Co-Chairs Ginny Russ and Janet Smith. Without their hard work, and the help of many other volunteers who served on committees and helped during the gala, Fur Ball would not be possible! Save the date and join us again next year for Fur Ball 2026 on Saturday, November 7, at the InterContinental Hotel Cleveland and virtually! (Photos by Dan Sandy)



Guests were dressed in their poodle skirts and leather jackets!

Thank You to Our Sponsors!

DIAMOND



Cynthia Hazelton

MWI Animal Health*
cencora



GOLD



Chemical Solvents, Inc.



Ken Ganley
AUTO GROUP

La Bodega

MWI Animal Health*
cencora



Tucker
Ellis LLP

SILVER

WALTER | HAVERFIELD^{LLP}
Attorneys At Law

MALONEY + NOVOTNY LLC
www.maloneynovotny.com



vocon.

Claire & Adam Zangerle

BRONZE



ROLLING SHORES PROPERTIES LLC

Don & Cathy Sinko

BRASS



David Reimer and Raffaele DiLallo

MEDIA



wkyc studios



Opportunities to Give

Ways to Support

Many generous individuals choose to donate to the Cleveland APL in lieu of giving gifts for birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, Bat Mitzvahs, Bar Mitzvahs, etc. Their thoughtfulness is a wonderful tribute to their love for animals. Call 216-344-1353 if you would like to learn more about how your celebration can help the APL's homeless animals.

In addition, many individuals choose to give through a workplace giving program. Federal employees also can give to the APL through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC). The Cleveland APL's Combined Federal Campaign number is 29857. The Cleveland APL's Tax ID number is 34-0714644.

Thank You So Much!

*Thanks to the generosity and efforts of everyone involved in these events, over **\$11,707.57** was raised to help the Cleveland APL and our animals.*

Cleveland Guardians for donating proceeds from "Bark in the Park" to the Cleveland APL.

Falls & Co. for donating to the Cleveland APL through its staff fundraiser and pet item donation drive.

Great Lakes Publishing for donating to the Cleveland APL.

Jack Cleveland Casino for collecting donations for the Cleveland APL through its Change for Charity program.

Sweet Designs Chocolatier Inc. for hosting an online fundraising raffle and matching donations.

We also appreciate the additional in-kind donations we have received from our friends and supporters. To learn about how your business or organization can host your own Community Fundraiser, please call Cristy Aul, Events Manager, at 216-377-1628. You can also visit our website, www.ClevelandAPL.org to view our Community Fundraiser Policies and Application.

Other Ways to Give

The Cleveland Animal Protective League's programs and services are made possible through donations from caring people like you. Here are just a few of the ways you can give to the Cleveland APL, allowing us to continue our life-saving work, while receiving tax benefits as well.

- You can make a stock gift to the Cleveland APL. Here is the information you will need to gift stock:

Raymond James

DTC Participant #725

For further credit to: Animal Protective League a/c #8855Y413

- Your investment in a donor-advised fund provides an immediate tax benefit for you, and that means your donations go even further to help the causes closest to your heart.
- If you have an IRA and are over 70½ years old, you can reduce your taxable income by directly transferring your required minimum distribution to a qualified charity such as the Cleveland APL.

For more information about any of these giving options, please call Judy Hunter, Vice President of Philanthropy and Communications, at 216-344-1353.

Pucks And Paws

It's back! The Cleveland Monsters invite all four-legged friends and their "people" to the 16th Annual Pucks & Paws event at Rocket Arena. The Monsters will be playing the Grand Rapids Griffins on Saturday, March 7, at 4:00 PM.

The APL has always been the beneficiary of the dog tickets, and again this year we will also receive a portion of the "human" tickets that are bought through this special offer. For the APL to receive the additional fundraised portion of the human tickets, please use the pass code "APL26" when purchasing your tickets online to this fun event for you and your pooch! Visit www.ClevelandAPL.org for more details or call Jessica Fisher at 216-420-2143.



Please note: Tributes and Memorials at \$100 and above are now listed on our website. Please visit www.clevelandapl.org/about-us/pet-patter/ to see the listings.



Happy Tale Cont.

Freddie Continued...

Recently, Ericka decided that Freddie might like to have a feline sibling. So, the family returned to the APL where they got Freddie a younger brother, an orange kitten named Eiffel Tower. Freddie instantly, and literally, fell for his little brother, laying down on top of him!

Eiffel Tower from the start was a bit of a spitfire, zooming around, making pigeon sounds. Freddie, though, is a tolerant older brother and remains his calm, peaceful self.

Freddie's little brother was renamed George. Freddie and George: just like the Weasley brothers in the Harry Potter series. Now, Ericka says happily, they have "their two ginger boys." And Freddie's chosen family is complete. Congratulations, Freddie, to you and your family, on your happily-ever-after.



Freddie and Georgie love cuddling together.

Make A Difference, Become a Cage Sponsor

At the Cleveland Animal Protective League, healthy, friendly animals stay with us as long as it takes to find a forever home, receiving the care they need and deserve. With your one-year, renewable cage sponsorship, you help provide a safe, temporary haven for these animals. Each sponsorship is recognized with a plaque, which can honor a loved one or promote your business.

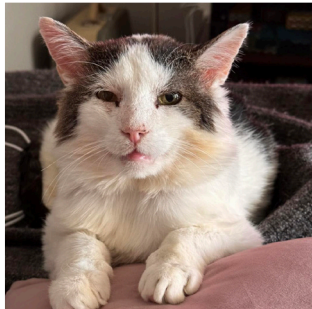
Dog Cage Sponsorship



Spike was with us
8 months and 19 days.
Adopted!

One Year: \$1,800
Monthly (12x a year): \$150

Cat Cage Sponsorship



Kipper was with us
5 months and 22 days.
Adopted!

One Year: \$1,500
Monthly (12x a year): \$125

Small Mammal Cage Sponsorship



Checkers was with us
1 month and 15 days.
Adopted!

One Year: \$1,300
Monthly (12x a year): \$108.33



Scan QR Code

Interested in becoming a cage sponsor or renewing your current one?

Visit clevelandapl.org/sponsor-a-cage or
contact Hannah MacIntyre, Annual Fund and Database Manager,
at 216-255-5024 or hmacintyre@clevelandapl.org for more information.