



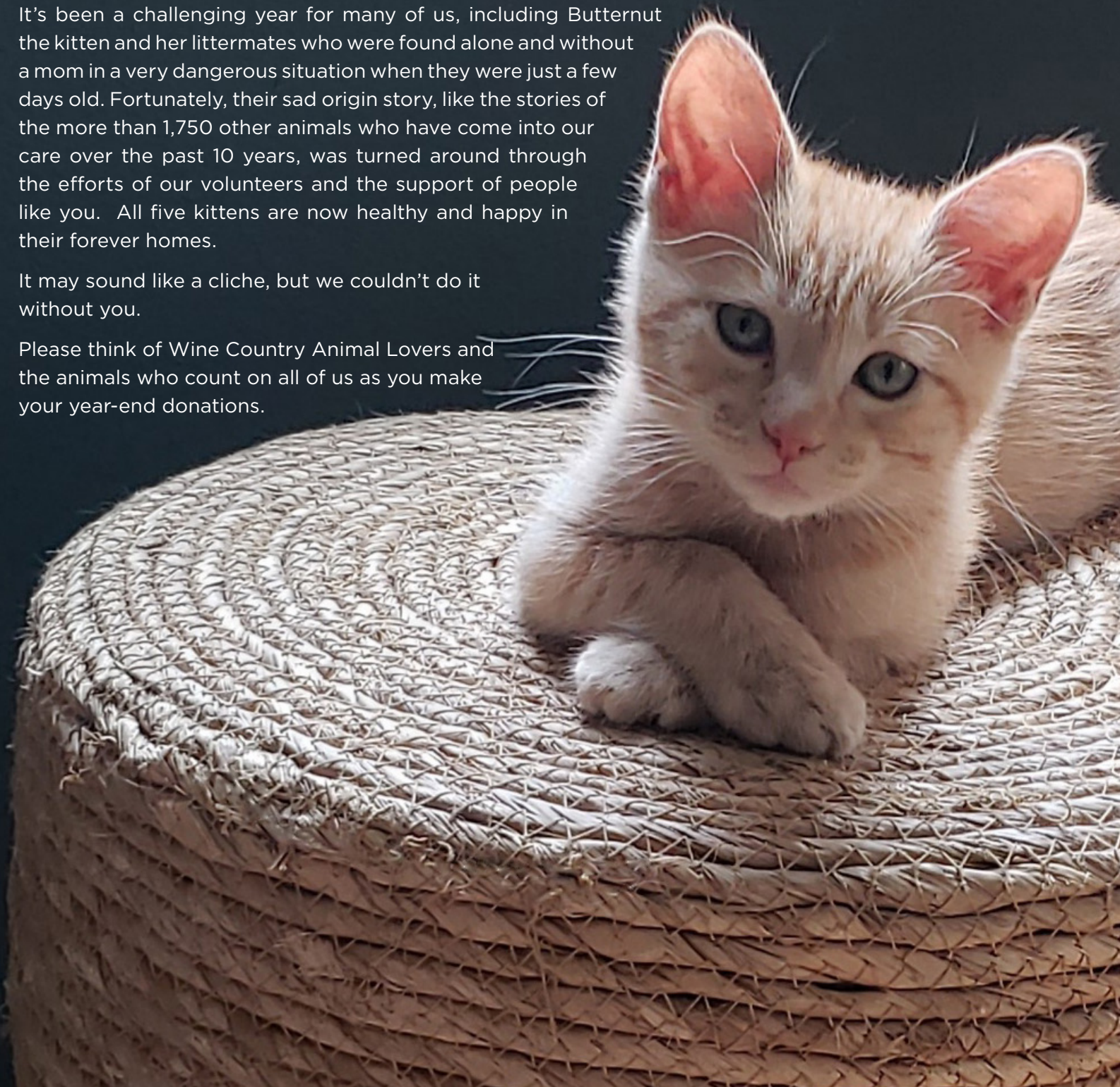
WINE COUNTRY ANIMAL LOVERS NEWSLETTER

THEY'RE COUNTING ON US

It's been a challenging year for many of us, including Butternut the kitten and her littermates who were found alone and without a mom in a very dangerous situation when they were just a few days old. Fortunately, their sad origin story, like the stories of the more than 1,750 other animals who have come into our care over the past 10 years, was turned around through the efforts of our volunteers and the support of people like you. All five kittens are now healthy and happy in their forever homes.

It may sound like a cliché, but we couldn't do it without you.

Please think of Wine Country Animal Lovers and the animals who count on all of us as you make your year-end donations.





PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Our team of life-saving animal rescuers had to dig deep this past year to keep up the momentum. Faced with limited funding and escalating costs of everything from pet food to veterinary care, we're getting creative to continue to support local pet owners as we have for the past ten years. Thankfully, we belong to a community that loves cats and dogs, recognizes their value, and is willing to prioritize helping those in need.

From the many businesses like Cal Mart and Calistoga Pet Clinic with WCAL donation boxes by their cash registers, raising funds for spay/neuter one quarter at a time, to the young girl who asked for donations of pet supplies, toys, and food for WCAL instead of birthday gifts, one thing is clear: it's the little things that can make the biggest difference. These small gestures really do add up and they're such a nice reminder that there is a way for everyone to participate. The kindness of our followers, donors, and adopters certainly makes our fosters and volunteers feel appreciated.

The individuals that our volunteers interact with at events or on the phone are grateful for the resources, financial assistance, trapping tips, training advice, and especially the moral support we have to offer. We're taking the time to try and spread the love however possible and make sure everyone in our area who is trying to get help for an animal feel heard and supported.

It's incredibly rewarding for our fosters to watch malnourished animals rest comfortably as they grow healthy in our homes and then to hear what a profound impact they've had on the families who adopt them from WCAL. One animal at a time, one family at a time, animal rescue sure is addicting and we really do want to help them all. We want to say YES to every litter of kittens born outdoors under a shed and those sweet seniors from our shelters who need a little extra TLC. Here's where you come in.

We are only here because of our small but mighty team of volunteers, our dedicated board of directors, and the support of YOU, our wonderful community. **Thank you for supporting our rescue projects, loving your pets, and trusting us to make a difference for the animals of Napa, Lake, and Sonoma counties. Thank you for all the small gestures (and the big ones too).**

Alissa McNair

Alissa McNair
WCAL Board President

A HEARTWARMING ADOPTION TALE

OWL FINDS HIS FOREVER HOME

Owl came to WCAL as part of a malnourished, underage litter of pups that were being sold on the side of the road for gas money. His story is a testament to the power of compassion and the unwavering dedication of our small but mighty rescue organization. If our volunteers hadn't jumped into action, what became a story of hope and triumph could have been very different.

The road to Owl's new life was not without its trials. He and his 11 siblings were taken from their mother too early and had been living together in a car, barely subsisting on a diet of Slim Jims and KoolAid. The scene was horrific. After being entrusted to WCAL, they were bathed and quickly settled into a foster home where they eagerly tasted their first canned food. These puppies had been exposed to both Giardia and Parvovirus and four of the twelve pups were in such bad shape that despite all interventions, they did not survive. This heartache weighed heavy on the hearts of their fosters. Thankfully, Owl emerged as one of the lucky ones.

Owl, with his stunning all-white coat, spotted nose and floppy ears, was born deaf. His snuggly personality quickly captured the hearts of all those who met him. His foster family knew he was something special from the moment they laid eyes on him and were willing to do whatever it took to accommodate his special needs.

Growing up in his foster home, Owl's spirit shone brightly. He was always ready for a good time, eagerly seeking attention and showering his humans with affection. A quick learner, Owl easily mastered a few hand signs early on. When he wasn't busy chewing sticks or roughhousing with his brothers, there was one spot that held a special place in Owl's heart – an orange chair that became his favorite lounge spot.

Owl's unique qualities, his sweetness, cleverness, and silliness, endeared him to everyone he met. His deafness ensured that he could sleep soundly

through household noises and required a bit of extra care when playing with his siblings because he didn't hear their pleading yips for mercy. It also meant he could focus on tasks with incredible determination.

Owl's journey led him to a family that recognized his potential, a family who was ready for the challenge of raising a deaf dog. They embraced him wholeheartedly, knowing that with their love and guidance, Owl would thrive.

This lucky puppy went home with two other WCAL alums, Clover and Windsor, and their dedicated pet parents. His new family did their research and learned all they could about raising a deaf dog. Their other dogs have both attended reward based classes and now they are acting as Owl's mentors and companions.

Today, Owl is no longer that malnourished pup rescued from an impossible situation. He is a symbol of resilience, love, and second chances. Owl's story is a reminder that every dog, regardless of their unique challenges, has the potential to become an incredible companion, a loyal friend, and an unwavering source of love.

WCAL Board of Directors

Alissa McNair, President
Camille Lina, Vice President
Donna Leverenz, Secretary
Wendy Brooks, Treasurer
Mark Doherty, Board Member
Helen Newmiller, Board Member

Medical Advisor: Dr. Steve Franquelin



CLIFFORD: THE SNUGGLY RED DOG

We learned about Clifford when he was just an 11-week-old puppy, being given away in front of a store in Lake County. Thanks to the intervention of a kind-hearted good Samaritan, he was rescued and brought to Wine Country Animal Lovers, where he got a second chance.

Upon arriving at WCAL, Clifford's breed mix was uncertain, but one thing was clear – he was 100% pure Snuggleupagus. All he craved was love, cuddles, and peanut butter. Clifford excelled at spooning and snuggling. We got him treated for Giardia and he quickly started putting on weight. Once he was healthy, he was able to spend time in three different WCAL foster homes, socializing with kids, dogs and cats. Our fosters put in a lot of time helping their young canine house guests master potty training, leash skills and other important life skills intended to set them up for success. His perfect family then submitted their adoption application.

For Kayla and Shay, it was love at first sight when they met Clifford. Kayla's striking red hair perfectly matched Clifford's shiny red coat, and he immediately claimed his spot in their home. Now he's almost a year old and Clifford has become an essential part of their family.

They describe Clifford as the sweetest dog ever, with no mean bone in his body. He adores playing with other dogs and cats and wants to be included in every activity. Clifford even accompanies Shay to work and shares his home with two adult cats, one of whom loves romping around with him.

As part of the adoption commitment from WCAL, Clifford's new family signed up to attend puppy training classes with him. Studies show that puppies who have the opportunity to attend reward based training classes with their humans are more likely to stay with their family in the long term than untrained dogs who are commonly surrendered to shelters when they begin to struggle in adolescence. Clifford continues to practice at home daily and it shows! His talents now include sit, shake, lay down, and rollover. He's even learned how to swim, which he absolutely loves.

Clifford's DNA test revealed his ancestry: 45.7% American Pit Bull Terrier, 24.8% American Staffordshire Terrier, 16.7% German Shepherd Dog, 6.5% Bulldog and 6.3% Boxer. He enjoys playing with his best dog friend, Luna, walking with Kayla, and playing fetch.

His role in Kayla's recent proposal to Shay makes Clifford even more endearing. Kayla set up a tripod at the beach under the guise of taking pictures of Clifford, but it was all a clever distraction to surprise Shay with a proposal. It worked like a charm!

As Kayla and Shay look ahead, they're planning for Clifford to walk Kayla down the aisle in an adorable little suit. "He makes my heart smile. I can't describe it. He's exactly what we needed," says Kayla. And one thing is certain: Clifford's favorite treat is still peanut butter.



*Clifford, adopted from
WCAL in May, 2023*

LOVINA SHARES THE LOVE

Jennifer Bennett recently hosted a second successful “Dine and Donate” event at her Calistoga restaurant Lovina to raise funds for Wine Country Animal Lovers. We enjoy partnering with local businesses and appreciate Lovina’s support for the cats and dogs we serve. Her events have been successful because she makes a point of inviting guests to bring their well-behaved pets, usually dogs, to help people feel more enthusiastic about coming out for a great cause. Jennifer’s love for her own pets and passion for animal rescue is truly inspiring.

When asked about her WCAL involvement, Jennifer said, “I’ve always supported animal rescue through donations, fostering, and restaurant events. I was very impressed with WCAL’s activity during the evacuations and decided to add them to my roster of rescues.” She understands that people like donating food, toys, and blankets, but raising funds that can be spent on veterinary care goes much further. Overall, Jennifer hopes to have a positive impact not only with her fundraisers, but also by helping WCAL gain more followers and supporters in the community.

We would also like to give a huge shout-out to Silverado ACE Hardware, Johnny’s Bar in Calistoga, LJL Collection and Fleetwood Restaurant at the Calistoga Motor Lodge for hosting fundraising events for WCAL this year. Do you own a business that could join in on the fun and support us to help the animals in need? Please reach out to us at info@WineCountryAnimalLovers.org



*Jennifer Bennett, owner of Lovina,
with a couple of her pets.*

WAYS YOU CAN GIVE

Your support of Wine Country Animal Lovers is what allows our foster volunteers and veterinary partners to provide loving homes, good nutrition and quality medical assistance to the animals in our care. While it may sound like a cliché, it’s true – we really couldn’t do what we do without you.

THERE ARE MANY WAYS TO HELP:

- Scan the QR code or visit www.winecountryanimallovers.org/donate to make a one-time donation or set up a monthly gift
- Use the enclosed envelope to send us a check
- Donate something from our Chewy wish list: <https://t.ly/oEns>
- Set up a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA; you may give up to \$100,000 per year tax-free or use your gift to satisfy all or part of your required minimum distribution after you turn 72*
- Donate appreciated stock that you’ve held for at least one year; WCAL receives the full value and you may be eligible for income tax savings*
- Consider a bequest or endowment to Wine Country Animal Lovers as part of your estate planning

** This information is not intended as legal or tax advice; please consult an attorney or tax advisor before making decisions that involve your investments.*





“Fostering is fun and rewarding, but even if you can't foster, WCAL is a great organization to get involved in. We do so much good in helping keep the pet population in balance and helping animals find loving homes.”

- Lauren & Fernando

FOSTER PROFILE:

LAUREN & FERNANDO - WELCOME ABOARD!

Meet Lauren and Fernando, the dynamic duo from Calistoga! Their journey with WCAL reflects the importance of community involvement and the boundless love for our furry friends.

Lauren and Fernando first volunteered with Wine Country Animal Lovers last fall. Lauren, a true animal lover, was motivated by the impact she experienced as an adopter. “We’ve had three WCAL kitties, and they’ve all been great,” Lauren shared. Although not officially a volunteer, Fernando is always willing to lend a hand. He shares Lauren’s love for animals and is eager to help, emphasizing the sense of community that WCAL represents.

Lauren and Fernando are currently fostering a litter of kittens, lovingly referred to as “the Aussies.” Lauren observes that fostering provides these animals with social skills, helping them form strong bonds with loving families. She believes that if these kittens were in a shelter environment, they wouldn’t have the same opportunity to develop the vital “people skills” that make them such loving and outgoing pets.

Lauren and Fernando’s experience highlights our support and guidance to new volunteers and

fosters, including quick responses and assistance when needed. For this couple, supporting a cause like WCAL and community involvement are the most rewarding aspects of volunteering.

If you are thinking about fostering and are worried about the time commitment or the emotional attachment that comes with it, Fernando advises that while it is indeed a commitment, it can also be a highly rewarding experience. Plus, we have a robust support system for volunteers and foster parents. We provide all the necessary supplies for fostering, including food, litter, carriers, and veterinary care.

In addition to fostering, Lauren and Fernando continue to support us at events. They brought a little extra flare when Fernando dressed up in a blowup dog costume and danced down Lincoln Ave with our marching Fourth of July Parade contingent.

Lauren and Fernando have a simple message for those considering volunteering or

fostering with WCAL: “Fostering is fun and rewarding, but even if you can’t foster, WCAL is a great organization to get involved in. We do so much good in helping keep the pet population in balance and helping animals find loving homes.”

Their journey is a testament to the positive impact that community members can have when they join together for a common cause. Stories like Lauren and Fernando’s remind us of the transformative power of community, love, and unwavering dedication to the well-being of animals in need.



Visit our website at www.WineCountryAnimalLovers.org to foster or volunteer. You can also reach out to us on Facebook.



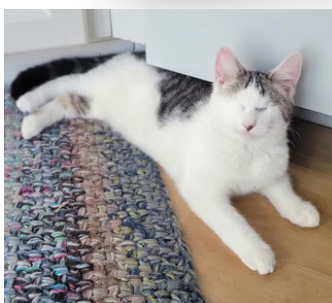
HOT DOG!

IT WAS A GREAT FOURTH OF JULY

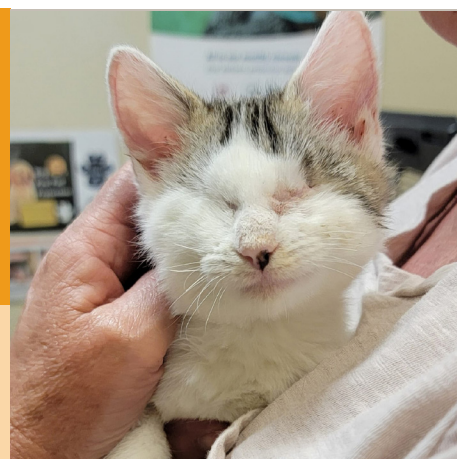
Did you see us at Calistoga's 4th of July Parade this year? Much of the work our small but mighty band of fosters and volunteers does is hard to see because we don't have a physical shelter, but we'll do whatever it takes to raise awareness of the work that we do.

As we walked the parade route, it was "raining cats and dogs" on the Crazy Cat Ladies who were handing out Tootsie Rolls to the kids in the crowd, our trainer was doing her best to teach Fernando the giant inflatable dog some new tricks and Owl the deaf puppy's foster mom was encouraging spectators to wave if they thought he was cute.

The Neuter Fairy even made an appearance to remind everyone how important it is to get your pets spayed and neutered! Animal rescue is serious business, but there's always room for fun!



Meryl's blind, ninja-kitty magic is in full effect as she explores her foster home, proving that her condition doesn't slow her down one bit.



MEET MERYL STREEP:

A BLIND KITTEN WITH A BRIGHT FUTURE!

We have a superstar in our midst, and her name is Meryl Streep. No, not the celebrated Hollywood actress, but a blind kitten with a heartwarming story and a bright future. Meryl Streep is extraordinary, and she's now ready to find her forever home.

Meryl captures the hearts of everyone who's had the privilege of meeting her. This curious explorer has come a long way from her challenging start in life. Meryl was part of a large litter of very sick kittens that required a great deal of love, care, and round-the-clock attention to survive.

Her infection was so advanced that both her eyes had to be surgically removed, but despite this set-back, Meryl's spirit remains unbroken. She's playful and sweet.

What's truly remarkable about Meryl is how she seamlessly navigates her surroundings, and if you didn't know she was blind, you might not even realize it. She moves around her foster home gracefully, chasing after her furry friends and playing with toys like a pro. Her favorite pastime is batting at her loud wand toy adorned with jingle bells, which she adores.

Everyone who meets Meryl is quick to comment about her soft, bunny-like fur and her affectionate nature. "When you sit down and call her, Meryl will gladly come to you, hop onto your lap, and purr with delight." This charming kitten enjoys gentle interactions and prefers not to be suddenly petted or picked up from above without warning. She relies on your voice to tell her what is about to happen.

Separated from her mother at a very young age, Meryl is very comfortable around people, exceptionally confident and attention seeking. Her complete lack of street smarts and naivety about the outside world make it crucial for her to find a family dedicated to keeping her safe indoors for life.

The good news is that Meryl Streep is officially available for adoption!

Her health is excellent after recovering from two eye surgeries, and she's already spayed, microchipped, and up-to-date on vaccinations. If you're looking for an exceptional feline companion, consider welcoming Meryl Streep into your life. She's not just an adorable kitten; she's an inspiration, a symbol of resilience, and a reminder that love knows no boundaries.



Wine Country Animal Lovers

P.O. Box 3
Calistoga, CA 94515
(707) 800-5058

info@WineCountryAnimalLovers.org



LEARN MORE
ABOUT US!



IZZY: FROM FeLV POSITIVE TO HAPPINESS

Alison was a recent empty nester with her youngest setting off for college, and her whole household was mourning the loss of their beloved 2-year-old calico when she chanced upon Izzy's photo online. "I saw Izzy's picture online and fell in love," Alison remembers. She knew this spunky kitten was exactly what their lonely young cat needed, too.

Izzy had to overcome a few obstacles to reach adoption day. This adorable, sweet orphan was found alone and brought to Clearlake Animal Shelter as a tiny baby. She was transferred to WCAL's care to be bottle-fed by our volunteers. This neonatal orphan was a feisty girl who never had any issues or symptoms of illness, so we were surprised when she tested positive for FeLV on spay day. Feline Leukemia

affects 2-3% of all cats in the US, and it can't be transmitted to humans or dogs, but it sure does sound scary. Many adopters would have changed their minds about bringing home a kitty who was potentially going to become ill or who might not live as long as other cats, but Izzy's humans decided she was worth it. "WCAL offered to send Izzy back to her foster home, which we couldn't do because we fell in love overnight and were so excited to bring her home," explains Alison.

WCAL's program director explained that there was a good chance that Izzy's body would eventually overcome the virus and suggested retesting her monthly. Fast forward four weeks, and we got the results we were hoping for, she tested FeLV negative! Izzy was most likely born to a FeLV+ mama cat

and exposed during birth, but we can't know for sure. Today, this kitty is happy and adored! "Izzy is my favorite snuggler," exclaims Alison. If we could all be as optimistic and accepting

as Izzy's adopters, the world would be a kinder and better place. A diagnosis of Feline Leukemia used to be an automatic death sentence for cats. Now there is more information about what to expect when adopting a FeLV+ cat, and we're grateful that more families are opting to give kitties who test positive a chance at a happily ever after.



*Izzy is my dream kitty.
Always by my side.
- Alison*



FOSTERS NEEDED

We can't keep up with all the requests to help kittens in need of rescue. Can you help? Do you have room for a litter of kittens in your spare bathroom? We're going to need all hands on deck to make sure these vulnerable babies being born outdoors stay warm. WCAL provides all the supplies, medical care and adoption services for our amazing team of fosters. Please consider signing up to be a lifesaver.

Cat Foster Application: WineCountryAnimalLovers.org/cat-foster-application