



PAW PRINTS

HE FOUND HIS WAY INTO OUR HEARTS

Cypress may not be able to see all the people who saved his life, but he certainly can feel their love and compassion. One can only imagine what his life was like before that night a year ago when he wandered down a dark alley, off Cypress Street in Baltimore City. It may have seemed as though his luck had just about run out.

But then, he was spotted by a kind lady. She picked him up off the street, took him in overnight, and gave him food, warmth and shelter.

The next morning, the finder brought him to BARCS and our emergency medical team got right to work. **Both of his eyes were too far gone to be saved, but we knew that even without his sight, Cypress could live a healthy and happy life.**

Now, he just needed a place to heal. Then, we could begin trying to find him a forever home.

Unfortunately, BARCS foster homes were already bursting at the seams. We didn't know how long it would take to find someone willing to adopt a cat that was blind. But, as the saying

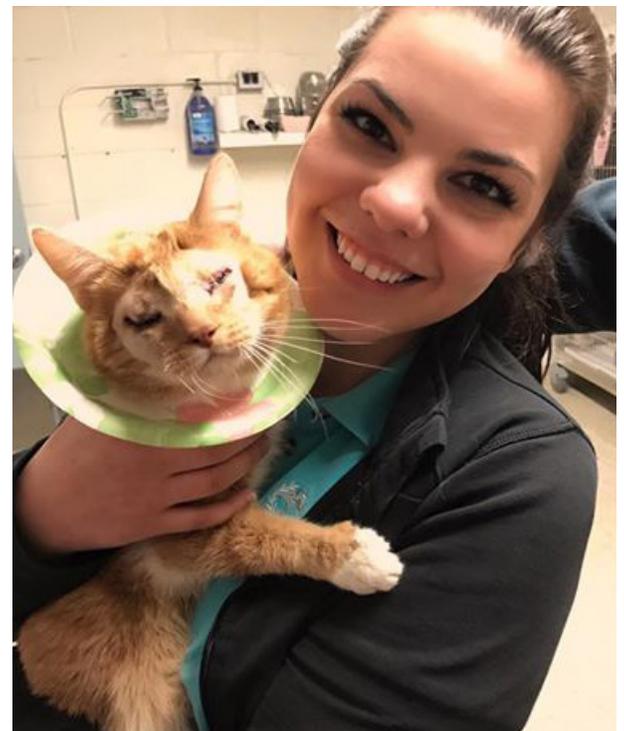
goes, "Love is blind." When Cypress' story was posted on Facebook, people immediately responded!

The news found its way to Ashleigh B. and captured her heart. She drove two hours – all the way from central Virginia – to come to his rescue. And she took the leap and made a full commitment to him. She not only agreed to take over his medical care, she officially made him a part of her family by adopting him.

Cypress required additional surgery and ended up spending his first month in his new home wearing a cone. "Once that cone was off," Ashleigh said, "there was no stopping him! He is the center of attention when we have guests. They just can't believe he has no eyes! He tosses his favorite toy mouse in the air and bats it around the house. Our other cats stay in tip-top shape with Cypress chasing

them to wrestle and play. He is one feisty guy, full of personality and energy."

More than 200,000 people followed Cypress' story on Facebook through BARCS, with an additional 3,500 special fans on his new fan page. The love, support and encouragement they express is heartwarming. Fans who also had blind cats share their photos and stories, too. **An animal's love is unconditional. And our community's love is boundless.**



Cypress and his forever Mom, Ashleigh.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

What an amazing lifesaving year 2017 was for BARCS and Baltimore's homeless animals. I'm happy to share that we ended the year with an overall save rate of 89%. As an open-admission, high-volume shelter — that took over a former operation with a 2% save rate — we are proud of this accomplishment and excited to grow our programs and save more lives in 2018.

Since the beginning, the health and well-being of our animals has always been a top priority. This quarter, we are focusing our newsletter on our medical department, its staff and the animals it serves, both in-shelter and aiding our community. Get the inside scoop in an interview with BARCS Director of Veterinary Medicine Dr. Bobbie Mammato on page 3. She and her team are often an animal's first loving touch on their road to recovery from extreme abuse, neglect or injury. They play a critical role in saving lives and rehabilitating our most vulnerable animals, like Cypress, a cat found lost and in a great deal of pain. You can read his story on page 1 (cover).

On the back cover, we share highlights from our monthly Low-Cost, Community Vaccine Clinic. This service is one of the many ways we are reaching beyond our shelter walls and into our community to help pets and their owners — serving more than 3,000 members of our community each year!

I hope you enjoy learning more about each of these impactful programs. Each life we touch and each life we save is made possible because of generous supporters like you. Thank you so much for your ongoing love for our animals and community.



Sincerely,
Jennifer Brause

Jennifer Brause
BARCS Founder and Executive Director

P.S. Pawject Runway is just around the corner on Saturday, May 5th! You will not want to miss out on this super fun evening filled with furry friends and celebrity sightings. Learn more about this lifesaving fundraiser on the right!



Saturday, May 5, 2018
6 - 10 p.m.

Royal Farms Arena
in Downtown Baltimore

Pawject Runway is the hippest fashion show on four paws featuring a five-star lineup of **Show Your Soft Side's Big Softies** "modeling" adoptable cats and dogs from **BARCS**.

Before the fashion show kicks off, enjoy the photo booth, puppy and kitten cuddle corner and high-end, curated silent auction.

General Admission tickets are \$35.00 and include the runway show admission/seating.

Pawject Runway is a premier event that is suitable as an adult-night out, but also a family-friendly event!

Tickets, model announcements, online auction and all event information can be found on www.pawjectrunway.org.



STAFF HIGHLIGHT: BOBBIE MAMMATO, DVM, MPH

BARCS Director of Veterinary Medicine Dr. Bobbie Mammato, is optimistic, tireless and passionate about her work. She has to be to keep up the frenetic pace. Each day begins at 4:45 a.m., and no matter what she has planned, she knows she must be flexible, because things can change in an instant.

“We open the doors for admissions to the shelter at 2 p.m., but people drop off animals all day long,” she said. “We are an open admission shelter, and we don’t turn anybody away. If we did, people might just release the animal again, and we’d rather they be with us.”

From moment to moment, there’s no telling what might come through the door. “That includes Animal Control,” she said. Along with public drop-offs, BARCS partners with Baltimore City Animal Control, that brings in new animals 24-hours a day. “If they have something really bad, they try to give us a heads-up, if possible. You learn to try to get as much done as efficiently as possible,

because you may be inundated five minutes from now. Whatever you had planned... well, it just isn’t a viable option anymore.”

But, despite the challenges, Dr. Mammato checks in with every animal each day. “I spend my days triaging. I do get to know every animal to some degree, but some just fly by my face – they get adopted so quickly and are so healthy.”

Dr. Mammato and her medical team treat more than 11,000 homeless animals per year. She is especially fond of the ones with more complex medical problems—the ones that not only need treatment but also some extra love. “Watching them come in, a lot of them are sad. Some are a little broken, and others aren’t feeling too well.” But after treatment, they change. “That’s the beauty of it,” she said. “Watching them leave looking good, and knowing you had a part in giving them a wonderful, pain-free life – that’s what keeps me going.”

In addition to the animals directly under her team’s care, she is also responsible for up to 600 animals in BARCS’ Foster Care Program. “Foster families are the most generous people in the world,” she said. “Some animals are just too traumatized and scared to eat or sleep here. But our fosters will open their homes even to cats that aren’t initially the friendliest. That’s pretty spectacular.”

Spaying and neutering all adopted animals plus outdoor cats that are part of BARCS’ Community Cat Program also adds to her team’s workload. But it is the animals that need medical care that take up most of her time.

“I was the first veterinarian hired by BARCS,” she said. “That was only 11 years ago, when our organization was created to take over the animal sheltering operations of Baltimore City. But we really didn’t have a medical program set up yet. In those days, we weren’t saving a lot of lives.” But today, she sees so much progress. “Our mission is to try to save every animal that’s savable, and to find the best outcome for each one. When you start from that premise, it changes the way you approach your work. Most animals that come in are homeless, or have been surrendered by their owners or seized by Animal Control. Many are underfed and ill. Some are frightened. But most of them are really happy to be interacting with people – they’re grateful and loving – and that’s what makes it all worthwhile. **We make sure everybody has a plan to get healthy so they’re ready for us to find them a forever home.**”



KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY HEALTHY: BARCS' LOW-COST MONTHLY VACCINE CLINIC



Members of our community bring their pets to us for low-cost vaccinations, helping prevent the spreading of dangerous illnesses.

As loving pet owners, we want to keep our pets healthy, happy, and free from pain and suffering. Saving lives, improving health and well-being, and building a strong community – it's what BARCS is all about. And nothing highlights this caring philosophy more than BARCS' public vaccine clinic. It is BARCS' way of giving back, and of understanding the unmet needs of the people and pets of Baltimore.

This popular monthly program helps families in Baltimore City care for their animal's needs, serving more than 3,000 pets and their owners each year. Pet owners can also have their pets microchipped, as well as purchase or renew their Baltimore City Pet License(s).

Claire Thomas Haddock is the volunteer manager at BARCS and organizes the Vaccine Clinic Program at BARCS. Claire said,

"The vaccine clinic is one of my favorite programs. It gives me the opportunity to speak directly with pet owners who are asking us for help. They really appreciate everything we do for them. This direct reach into our community expands our lifesaving abilities and helps pets stay healthy and in the homes of the people who love them."



Every month BARCS receives emails such as this one:

Dear BARCS,
I want to thank you for being a great part of [my dog] Dr. Pepper's and my life. You have provided services to us that otherwise I would not have been able to afford. We are so grateful, and words cannot express the love and kindness you all have for our furry companions. Keep doing the good deeds that you do.

Ben Harris is one of the many volunteers working at the monthly clinics. He said, **"I enjoy volunteering at the vaccine clinic because it helps both animals and the community at the same time. It's an important service that is provided at a low cost to residents. It also offers staff and volunteers a great opportunity to educate people about responsible pet ownership and about the many awesome things BARCS does for the community."**

The clinics are made possible through the generosity of our supporters. In 2017, thanks to generous grants and donations, BARCS was able to offer two additional pop-up clinics where all services, including spay and neuter were free to the public. With the necessary funding, we hope to continue to provide these additional clinics in the future, as well as our monthly low-cost clinic.