

ANNUAL REPORT

| 2020 FISCAL YEAR |

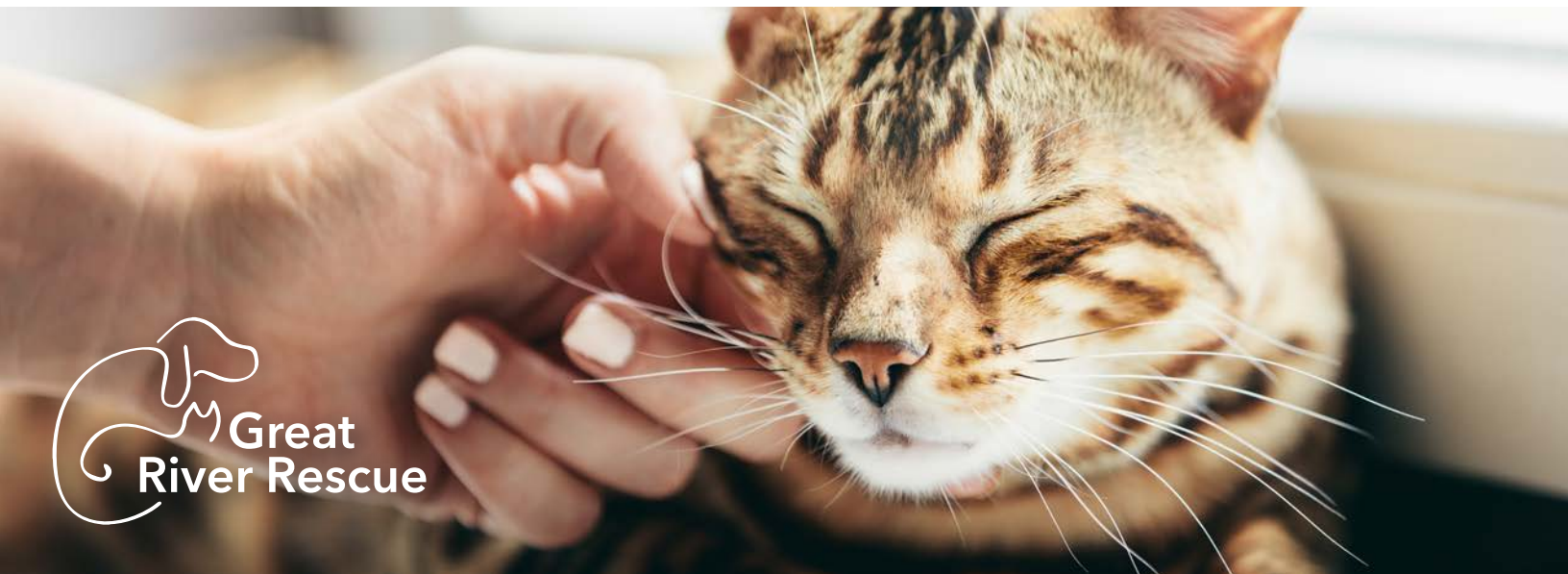


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Letter from the **DIRECTOR**



2020 was a unique and challenging year for so many reasons. While understanding and respecting the difficulties many of us faced, I feel so encouraged and blessed from the continued support of our community, and the progress of our organization. The pandemic did set us back a bit, and sidetrack some of our plans, but our staff, volunteers and supporters pushed forward to save hundreds of animal lives, all while implementing our new low-cost spay/neuter program Pet Fixers.

The implementation of Pet Fixers was probably the biggest highlight for us in 2020. Clinics were originally planned to begin in April, but had to be pushed back to June. Despite that, we were able to hold all planned clinics, and even added two more. In total, we held 10 clinics and spayed/neutered 683 dogs and cats. Not only that, but many of those pets received needed core vaccinations, microchips, and other wellness services. I am so grateful for all of our sponsors, volunteers, staff, and the veterinarians who put forth hundreds of hours and donations to make this program successful.

In addition to Pet Fixers, we launched a Home to Home website which allows pet owners to directly re-home their pets instead of bringing them to the shelter. This option is so important and helpful for animals that just won't do well in a shelter setting. It also provides an option for people looking for homes for animal species other than dog and cat like rabbits, mice or hamsters. The site was launched in June, and helped find adoptive home for 16 animals.

Thankfully, 2020 was also a strong year for GRR financially. We maintained robust donation numbers, and also earned various grants that weren't available to us in previous years. The board and I are working to use these funds wisely to build for a more sustainable future for the organization.

I am really excited about the future of this organization and the increased services we will be able to provide.

Many thanks to all of our supporters. Great River Rescue is a wonderful example of a true community organization. We are driven by our donors and volunteers.

Brandon Mustful

Brandon Mustful
Executive Director



Letter from the **BOARD CHAIR**

Mission:

Great River Rescue transitions dogs and cats to loving homes, serves as a community resource, and advocates for kind, responsible pet care.

Vision:

Great River Rescue envisions a society of responsible animal guardians in which every animal is treated with respect and care.

Values:

Care, compassion and empathy for animals and people.

Accountability to high standards of professional and ethical behavior.

Respect and kindness with every decision and interaction.

Board of Directors:

Geri Hickerson - Chair

Ara Gallo - Vice Chair

Jeanne Edevold Larson - Treasurer

Ann Mork - Secretary

Tessa Lauderbaugh

Eric Sundem

Jaimee Towers

Kevin Johnson

Barbara Godding

Lisa Weber

Letter from the Board Chair:

It is with mixed feelings I write this final report. I'm happy that I have served my term of 10 years, have served this great organization for, I think, over 2 decades, and that as I step away, Great River Rescue is thriving! I am sad that I will not be directly involved, however, will continue to serve on vital committees to continue to serve the animals I so love.

There is great strength and leadership within the Board of Directors, and I am confident they will provide the guidance and support staff needs to continue to further Great River Rescue's mission. I look forward to seeing the many changes that will allow staff to provide quality care to the animals that are in need of a forever home.

Special thanks to the staff, volunteers and donors who have been catalysts in creating the many positive changes over the past several years. They say it takes a village to raise a child. Well, it also takes a village to rescue companion animals. I have been blessed to have dogs and cats all my life, and have spent much of my adult life helping others find homes. One of my favorite quotes, from John Grogan (Marley and Me) speaks volumes. I hope you like it:

“Such short little lives our pets have to spend with us, and they spend most of it waiting for us to come home each day. It is amazing how much love and laughter they bring into our lives and even how much closer we become with each other because of them.”

My best to the Board, staff, and volunteers as they continue the great work they are called to accomplish.

Sincerely,
Geri Hickerson



Our 2020

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2020 presented some unique challenges for all of us. We continued to move forward with our mission though, and were able to accomplish a lot! Below is a list of just some of the things we were proud to accomplish.

Spayed/Neutered 683 Animals through Pet Fixers

2020 got off to a slow start due to COVID, but in the end we conducted 10 spay/neuter clinics and spayed/neutered 683 dogs and cats at a much lower cost than a standard vet clinic.

Kicked off our Home to Home adoption website

We launched a website to help pet owners and caretakers adopt out their pets directly rather than sending them to the shelter.

Implemented COVID Safety Protocols

We successfully implemented all recommended COVID-19 safety protocols which kept our staff and clients safe and healthy.

Began relationship with new veterinary partner

We began working with Northern Veterinary Clinic which has been a big help to us in keeping up with veterinary services.

Held our first-ever livestream fundraiser

In place of our Fall Harvest Gala, we held the Virtual Fall Fundraiser, our first livestream fundraiser. Over \$10,000 was raised from this event.

Limited turnover and continued staff development

Turnover ratio of staff remained low and our staff continued to educate themselves through various online webinars and other resources.

Improved financial health

Thanks to continued support from the community, and access to various grants, the financial health and stability of the organization improved.

Approved Shelter Remodel

A plan to remodel a section of the shelter was approved and work began in early 2021.

Produced new educational materials

Our Community Education Committee produced various videos for kids and began sending out a new Sit-Stay-Seek educational newsletter.



Our 2020 STATISTICS

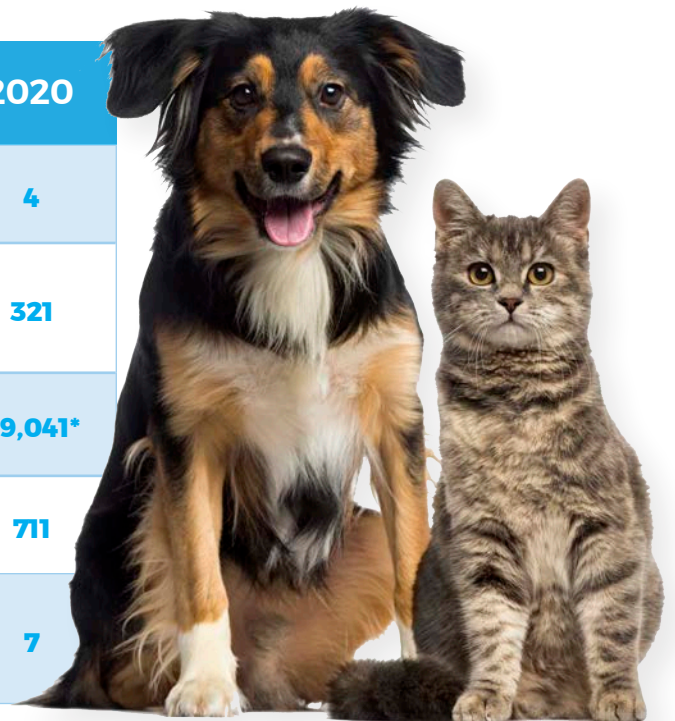
At Great River Rescue we strive to track our activities which helps us better manage operations. Below is a collection of various statistical data collected from 2019, as well as some comparisons to previous years.

Animal Movements: 2014-2020

Total intakes, adoptions & length of stay by year							
Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Intakes	345	362	420	400	407	392	335
Total Adoptions	342	364	353	390	349	360	322
Average Length of Stay (in days)	72	47	46	53	30	38	34

Outreach Statistics: 2018-2020

Outreach Type	2018	2019	2020
Educational Presentations	61	40	4
New Online Newsletter Subscribers	249	233	321
Unique Website Visits	35,010	39,394	39,041*
New Facebook Likes	563	574	711
Participants in Dog Training	18	20	7



*Missing two months of data.

Our 2020 STATISTICS

Animal Intakes: 2020

Location	Dog	Cat	Total
Area Pounds	18	66	84
Owner Surrender	36	33	69
Stray	8	107	115
Other	29	38	67
Total	91	244	335

Animal Outcome Details: 2020

	Dog	Cat	Total
Adoption	99	223	322
Reclaimed	6	2	8
Died or Euthanized	0	8	8
Transferred	1	0	1
Total	106	233	339



Volunteer Data: 2018-2020

	2018	2019	2020
Total Logged Volunteer Hours	1,963	2,884	2702
New Volunteers	54	36	18
Total Volunteers	85	90	52

Donation Data: 2018-2020

	2018	2019	2020
Total Donors	554*	647*	690*
Average Gift Size	\$107.75	\$111.28	\$112.88

*Total donors number is an estimate. Some of our donations come through a variety of online sources and programs such as Amazon Smile which makes it challenging to track the exact number of donors to the organization. The estimated number is probably lower than the actual.

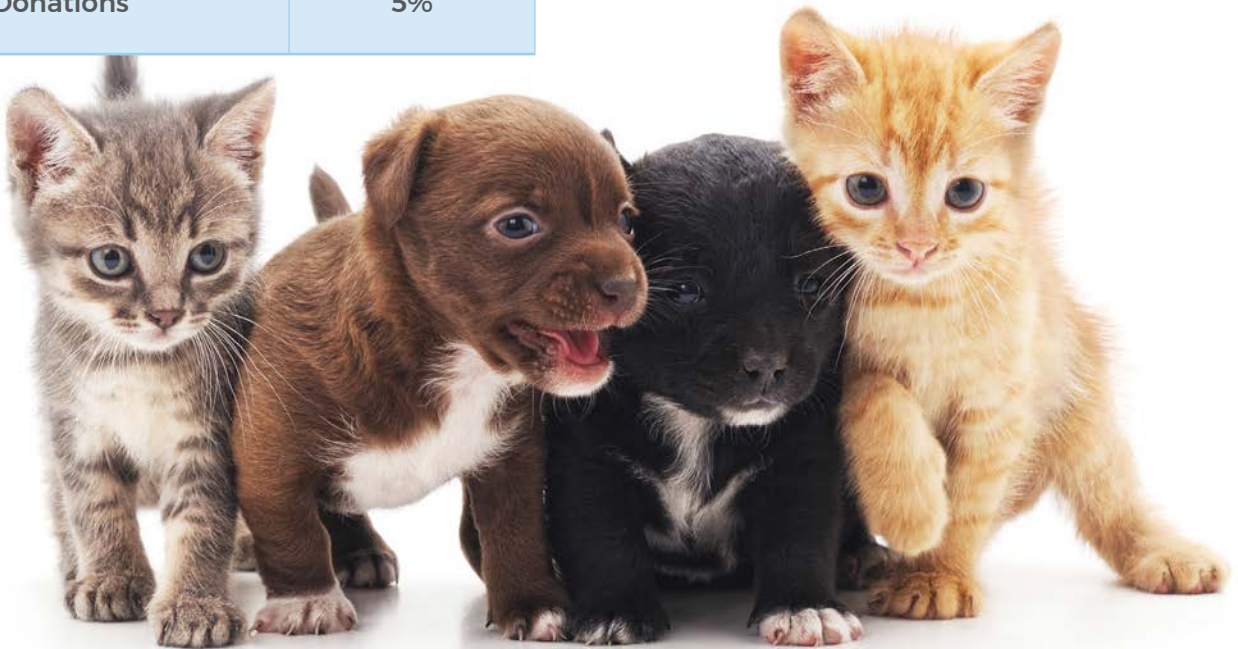
2020 Financial HIGHLIGHTS

Revenue Sources: 2020

	2020
Total Revenue	\$436,700.68
Special Event Fundraisers	11%
Special Project Fundraisers	14%
Earned Revenue	23%
Individual & Business Donations	16%
Grants	29%
In-Kind Donations	5%

Other Stats: 2020

	Dog	Cat	Total
Spay & Neuter	284	455	739
Requests for Surrender	216	689	905
Vaccinations Given	186	595	781
Vet Visits	18	34	52
Average Length of Stay	21	39	34



2020 Financial HIGHLIGHTS

While 2020 was a tumultuous economic year, our supporters continued to step up to help us save animal lives. Additionally, GRR was fortunate to have access to grant funding and other new sources of revenue. Here are some of the highlights of our financial year.

- Acquired Pet Fixers program along with all of its assets
- Total donations increased by 16.5% from 2019
- Grant funding over five times greater than 2019
- Adoption fees declined by 14% due in part to government shut down
- Services fees nearly doubled due to Pet Fixers program
- Fundraising expenses remained low - for every \$1 spent, \$52.34 was raised
- Expenses were on target - 99% of budget

Income Data:	2017	2018	2019	2020
Individuals	\$87,454	\$93,454	\$112,453	\$134,459
Foundations (grants)	\$16,539	\$31,030	\$23,388	\$128,078
Fundraising Events	\$42,751	\$32,038	\$37,097	\$49,849
Fees	\$46,470	\$52,971	\$53,386	\$100,954
Gift Shop	\$3,632	\$6,135	\$5,752	\$4,156
Other	\$15,865	\$8,810	\$16,319	\$19,204
TOTAL	\$212,711	\$224,438	\$248,395	\$436,700

*Financial data is unaudited. To view full financial data as submitted to the IRS, find us on Guidestar.org.



Services

PROVIDED

Great River Rescue is a private, non-profit, companion animal shelter located in Bemidji, Minnesota. We make every effort to save, care for, and find homes for each animal that comes through our doors. We provide high-quality care and enrichment for shelter pets and get them into homes with loving and responsible pet owners. Additionally, beginning in 2020, we offer low-cost spay/neuter services through our Pet Fixers program. Great River Rescue is supported by our community who believes in our work and has always been by our side.

Since inception in 1977, Great River Rescue has helped thousands of animals with a second chance at life. We are very proud of these and other efforts which have made our dream a reality and now allows us to provide even greater quality service for more than 400 animals per year.



Some of Great River Rescue's main services include:

- Taking-in animals from local pounds, pet owners, and those who find strays in their communities.
- Providing quality care for each pet including vaccinations, de-worming, flea/tick treatment, blood tests, spay/neuter, daily enrichment, behavior modification, and more.
- Adoption of animals to responsible pet owners.
- Micro-chipping of pets upon request.
- Volunteer opportunities.
- Educational outreach regarding animal welfare related issues.
- Being a resource for the community regarding animal care and welfare issues.
- Low-cost spay/neuter and preventative care services.

Our 2021

INITIATIVES

Great River Rescue continues to be busy saving lives and building for a sustainable future. Some of our current and future initiatives include:

- Now providing microchips and Rabies vaccinations for every animal
- Newly remodeled shelter areas to provide a better intake experience for our animals, and better adoption experience for our adopters
- Expansion of our Pet Fixers spay/neuter program to help more people and animals
- Improved relationships with local veterinary and municipal partners
- New staff positions to help provide more and better services to the community
- Further reduced length of stay to save more animals and increased adoption numbers



Our 2020

STAFF MEMBERS

Great River Rescue is operated by a dedicated and hard-working staff. Shelter pets do not take a day off, which means our staff needs to be there for them every day of the year. In addition to serving the pets, our staff dutifully serves the public. Great River Rescue could not exist without the selfless efforts of its staff.

- **Brandon Mustful**

Executive Director

- **Kylie Hudzik**

Kennel Coordinator

- **Mary Wolkerstorfer**

Office Administrator

- **Jules Richardson**

Maintenance/Kennel Attendant

- **Savannah Marsh**

Kennel Attendant

- **Sheridan Ellis**

Kennel Attendant

- **Marissa Pribyl**

Kennel Attendant

- **Adam Marak**

Kennel Attendant

- **Aren Steever**

Kennel Attendant

- **Tess Skiles**

Kennel Attendant



We wanted give a

SPECIAL THANKS!

Great River Rescue is a community supported organization. Below is a list of just some of the people, businesses, and groups that made 2020 a successful year!

- The Animal Care Clinic
- Kevin Johnson and Great River Design
- Paul Bunyan Communications
- Mychal Moe for her graphic design work
- Beltrami Recycling
- The ASPCA Northern Tier Shelter Initiative
- Lueken's Village Foods
- Dearholt Tax & Accounting
- Mr. Moles Painting
- All businesses that have doggy banks!
- Marco
- Beltrami Electric Cooperative
- The Humane Society of the United States
- Mix 103.7
- Paul Bunyan Broadcasting
- Super 8 Hotel
- Everyone who supports Great River Rescue!



2020

HAPPY TAILS

(Actual emails sent from adopters)

Max:

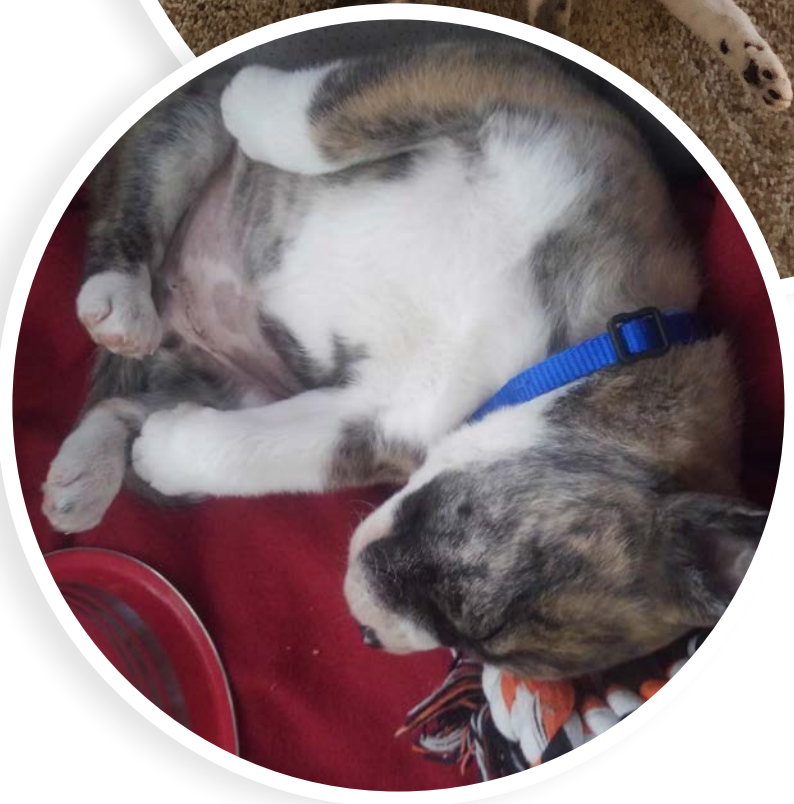
We adopted Max (formerly Carino) in December 2019. One of our favorite things about having him is watching him interact with our two huskies - he fit in perfectly from the time we brought him home! We laugh watching him sneak attack them when they come up the stairs or jump on their heads when they walk around the couch. We have had to childproof all of the cabinets in the house because he has become proficient at opening them all, and we were walking into the kitchen or a bathroom with every cabinet door open. Recently, he started opening cupboards and knocking food down to the dogs. He has such a personality, and he has been a great addition!

-THE WARLICKS

Nala:

We adopted Nala in December 2018 after fostering her for several weeks. She came to Great River Rescue as a stray, abandoned at a property, too young to be without mom or in the shelter alone. We soon fell in love with her as she got to know and learn from our resident dogs. She was a spitfire when small and had very aggressive play style. We would play in small sessions and stop quickly if she would get to worked up and excited. She continues to play very intense, but can now be redirected when needed.

- THERESA TOBON



2020

HAPPY TAILS

(Actual emails sent from adopters)

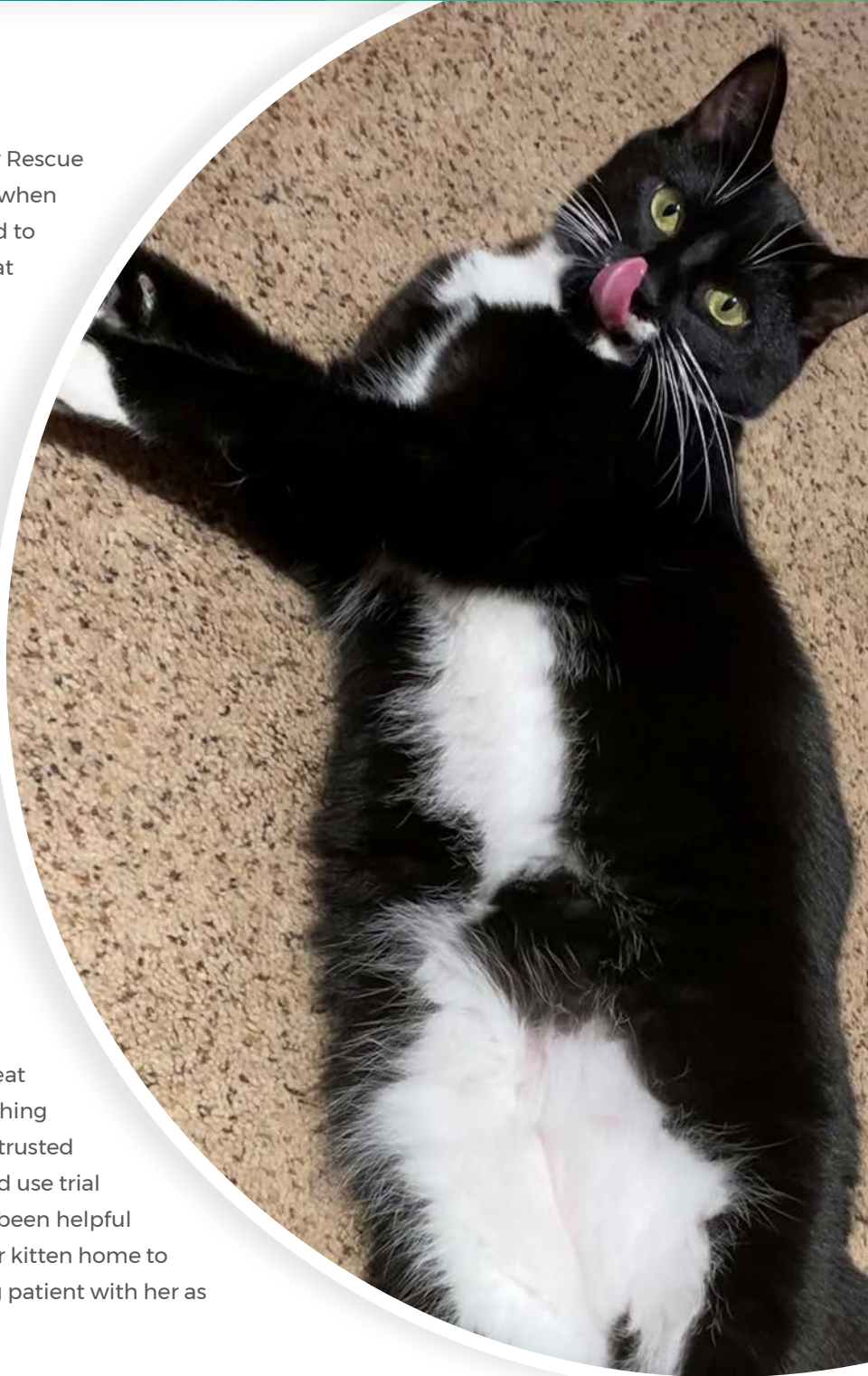
Snowberry:

My wife and I adopted our kitten from Great River Rescue in September of 2019. Our other cat was an adult when she was adopted, so the whole household needed to readjust to caring for a young pet who had great deals of energy and playfulness. Our older cat took some time to accept her new housemate, but they coexist now and seem to share an interest in watching through the window whatever comes to the bird feeder.

There has been a learning curve for our kitten in figuring out when claws and teeth can come out during play, but overall she is exceptionally well behaved. Our plan in helping her learn acceptable behavior has been to follow the advice of veterinarians and pet-care professionals to reinforce good behavior and deescalate undesirable behavior. We elected to use non-surgical, temporary claw covers to reduce the impact of scratching while our kitten learns what is and isn't OK to scratch. Additionally, bad tasting & non-toxic bitter apple spray has kept *most* of our shoelaces and electronics cords intact.

We couldn't be happier to have adopted from Great River Rescue. For other families who are teaching pets how to behave, we would suggest finding a trusted veterinarian or web based behavioral resource and use trial & error to see what works best for your pet. It has been helpful for us to keep sight of the fact that we brought our kitten home to love and have as part of our family, and that being patient with her as she learns is our responsibility as her caretaker.

- JAMES & KARIN HUGHES





Great River Rescue is committed to transparency and excellence in everything we do.

See our Guide Star Report at:
www.guidestar.org/profile/41-1551248



**Thank you for your
continuing support of
Great River Rescue!**

