



A Cat's Support During the Pandemic Wins Operation Kindness a Holiday Wishes Grant from the Petco Foundation

Votes Can Also Be Cast for the Shelter to Win Additional Funds to Save Homeless Pets

CARROLLTON, Texas (Dec. 9, 2020) – By envisioning a world where all animals receive the treatment they need to survive, a home for them to call their own and most prominently, support and love, [Operation Kindness](#) gives pets a second chance at a great quality of life. Over the years, with so many success stories, one story this holiday season stands out amongst the rest and recently won \$10,000 from the Petco Foundation's annual [Holiday Wishes](#) grant campaign. Kelsey, a staff member who works at the leading no-kill animal shelter, [shared her story](#) with the animal supply chain about her journey with Bruno, a blind cat with a mission to comfort his human mom while dealing with COVID-19. As one of the grant's winners, Operation Kindness is on a mission to share this incredibly heartwarming story and [call on the community to vote](#) by Dec. 16 for Kelsey and Bruno's inspiring story to receive additional funds benefiting the shelter in saving the lives of homeless pets in need.

"For this particular holiday season, I think everyone is looking for really great stories to turn to find some positivity and hope after the craziness of this year. I thought that by sharing my story with the Petco Foundation would be an incredible opportunity to shine light on the good in the world and how animals, with their unconditional love, can truly be a source of healing," said Kelsey, the marketing and communications manager at Operation Kindness. "The pandemic has brought on a lot of uncertainties, which is what I felt after testing positive for COVID-19, but with it came hope and a special furry friend that I am so proud to call my own. Bruno is such a joy to be around, and it's all thanks to the incredible staff at Operation Kindness for giving him a second chance."

Suspected to have feline infectious peritonitis (FIP), Bruno faced a challenging journey fighting for his life, nearly dying several times. But with the care of the veterinary staff at Operation Kindness over 10 months, Bruno pulled through and became known as "the miracle cat" by everyone at the shelter. Unfortunately, his illness took his eyesight, but that didn't stop him from becoming a wonderful office cat to Kelsey, the shelter's marketing and communications manager. Quickly learning that Bruno loved laying on her shoulders when she worked, the two quickly became best friends, and a bond undoubtedly formed.

Then, the COVID-19 pandemic hit, which changed everyone's lives, including the animals at the shelter. Operation Kindness decided to find all the animals temporary foster homes so it could close the shelter for the health and safety of staff members. Bruno, needing a place to stay, went home with Kelsey to keep her and her dog, Ed, company during quarantine. Bruno fit into the new family dynamic easily as a loving and affectionate cat, and his behavior became even more prominent when Kelsey's worst nightmare came true: she contracted COVID-19.

Fighting the disease from home as someone on her own, Kelsey often felt scared and nervous as she battled against the virus. But the one constant was Bruno, who knew exactly how to comfort Kelsey when she needed it the most; anytime she was scared, Bruno curled up beside her ear and purred. As a smaller creature than so



Kelsey with Bruno perched in his favorite spot—on Kelsey's shoulder!

many beautiful animals in the world, Bruno's size doesn't stop him from having a big heart full of love and joy.

"It was such a difficult and scary time dealing with being ill on my own, so having Ed and Bruno by my side gave me a lot of courage and comfort to know that they were right there with me. Bruno especially went out of his way to make sure that I knew he was there for me," said Kelsey. "He continues to be a supportive furry friend and even helps me ease my anxiety and post-traumatic stress. He's such a best friend and even helps Ed when he has his seizures. Bruno will lick Ed's face after a seizure to help calm him down. The power of genuine love in animals never ceases to amaze me."

Having faced so many health struggles of his own, Bruno is a true testament to the work that Operation Kindness does for homeless dogs and cats. Without their continuous support and love, many animals wouldn't have an opportunity to socialize, grow and thrive. Operation Kindness makes it its mission to go above and beyond to fight for animals in need of lifesaving care and medical services. When the staff, volunteers and the community rally behind adorable critters like Bruno, it gives them a fighting chance to overcome challenging obstacles and find the love and happiness they deserve.

Kelsey and Bruno's stories are only one of many that have come from Operation Kindness. Every day, families adopt pets and find a furry friend to build and create lasting memories with. All of this is made possible with the community's support, generosity and a widespread belief that animals deserve kindness and compassion. Creating programs, partnerships and resources with the donations that support the organization, the animal shelter can positively impact the lives of thousands of pets each year. Since 1976, Operation Kindness has been at the forefront of animal wellness by providing a safe haven to dogs and cats until they're ready to be adopted in a loving, responsible home.

For those who would like to participate in the Petco Foundation's voting event, individuals can do so at <http://wshe.es/UOPv8rZx>. Participants must vote in the People's Choice competition by Dec. 16. Individuals can read more about Kelsey and Bruno's wonderfully inspiring story on the Petco Foundation's website at www.petcofoundation.org/love-story/adopted-blind-miracle-cat-provides-hope-through-covid-19-diagnosis-and-beyond/.

To learn more about Operation Kindness and their support of homeless pets, visit www.operationkindness.org/about/. For ways to donate and help support the organization through generous monetary donations, learn how you can get involved at www.operationkindness.org/other-ways-to-give/.

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About Operation Kindness

Founded in 1976, Operation Kindness is the original no-kill animal shelter in North Texas. Its mission is to care for homeless cats and dogs in a no-kill environment until each is adopted into a responsible home. As an advocate for humane values and behaviors, Operation Kindness has been able to save more than 110,000 animals since its inception. The shelter assists more than 5,000 cats and dogs each year, caring for an average of 400 animals daily. To learn more about Operation Kindness, please visit <https://www.operationkindness.org/>.

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