

Cat's Medical Emergency Puts Strain on Amherst Resident

Mary Jo Sicurella was a “dog person” with no plans to own a cat. That changed after a friend saw a neighbor commit an act of cruelty against a 5-month-old kitten, and asked Sicurella to provide a safe if temporary home for the young feline. That’s how Evan came into her life.

Sicurella, who lives in Amherst, planned at first to get the kitten his shots and have him neutered, and then look for someone to adopt him. Only the adoption part never happened. Kittens have a way of doing that. “He was very sweet and cuddly, though he acted like a fierce cat at the vet,” Sicurella said.



When Evan was 5, two urinary blockages caused his health to take a turn for the worse. The cat was treated and seemed to recover, but when a third occurred Sicurella was told he would need surgery. “His life was in danger and the blockages were painful,” she said. “The surgery would hopefully keep him from having another blockage that could potentially damage his kidneys.” Sicurella was gripped with fear at the thought of losing him. “I was pretty much sure I would have to put him down, and I was beside myself.”

The unanticipated cost for Evan’s surgery -- \$1,700 -- was more than Sicurella could afford, adding to the strain of her cat’s medical condition. But her father reassured her they would find a way to give Evan every chance to survive. “He said whatever we need to do to make his life better we would do it,” Sicurella said. Help also came from the Pet Emergency Fund, which provided \$200 toward Evan’s medical care.

“I don’t know that I would have been able to make a decision to have major surgery without a little bit of help,” Sicurella said. “I am totally grateful to the Pet Emergency Fund. They made a very difficult time less traumatic. You can’t really put a value on your pet, and the fact they were there to help was just a great gift.”

Evan is now 10 and with the help of a special diet hasn’t had another urinary blockage. “He acts like a kitten and you would never know he’s 10,” Sicurella said. “He doesn’t know he’s a big cat and still thinks he can just curl up on my chest like a big kitten.”