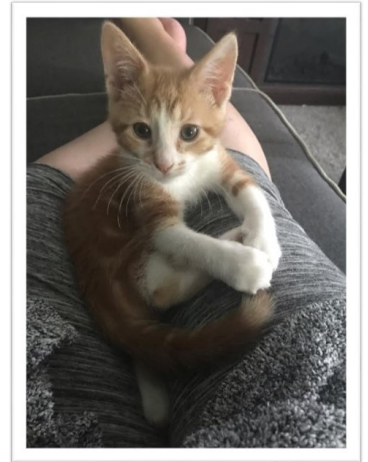


Lilo's On the Mend with Help from PEF

Something was suddenly wrong with Arianna Taylor's kitten. It was the kind of health problem that stops pet owners in their tracks and has them reaching for the phone to call their veterinarian. That's what the Amherst resident did.

Lilo, her adopted 4-month-old, orange-and-white kitten, had brought a lot of joy into her life after she spotted the feline among a litter her friend was finding homes for. "He came up to me and was very attached," Taylor said. She also liked the identifiable white mark on his neck that made him stand out.



Lilo was acting like a typical kitten until one morning in mid-October. That's when the little cat with big ears began meowing loudly as if in distress. "Lilo doesn't usually meow and he was very talkative that morning, meowing every second," Taylor said. Taylor noticed Lilo dragging his back legs as he tried to walk. Realizing something was seriously amiss, she reached for her phone and, after reaching the receptionist at Ken-Ton Animal Clinic, brought him in to get examined.

Taylor had taken Lilo for routine vaccinations days earlier and the kitten had been fine. Blood tests were taken to make sure he wasn't exposed to Feline Leukemia or FIV, the feline AIDS virus. Luckily, the tests came back negative. Tests were also done on Lilo's liver, kidney and blood sugar levels, which also failed to reveal anything wrong. Taylor's veterinarian eventually concluded Lilo was suffering from a neurological condition due to an infection from an organism called *Toxoplasma gondii*.

The vet wanted to start Lilo on daily antibiotics for the infection, but that turned out to be a steep financial climb for Taylor, who was operating on a tight budget even before her recent veterinary bill. That's when her vet said the hospital had money in its Pet Emergency Fund account that they would like to use on Lilo's behalf. "The fund is very helpful, and I know that without it I couldn't have paid for everything," she said. "I'm thankful that it's available and there for others to use."

The best news of all is that Lilo was back to his old self within a week of his emergency trip to the vet's office. "Lilo's doing great. He's active and isn't in any pain," Taylor said. "He's the same kitty he was before he got sick."