



# Fairfax Pets On Wheels Fall Update

October 2012



## Fairfax County Board of Supervisors' Proclamation

Whereas, Fairfax Pets On Wheels, under sponsorship of the Department of Family Services' Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, in cooperation with nursing homes and assisted living facilities in Fairfax County, provides pet therapy services to older adults; and

Whereas, petting animals has been medically proven to assist in curtailing the loneliness, depression and withdrawal often associated with residency in a nursing facility, enabling older adults to recall happier times; and

Whereas, Fairfax Pets On Wheels, begun 25 years ago, has grown from 20 volunteers and their pets to more than 300 volunteers and their pets; and

Whereas, Fairfax Pets On Wheels – an all-volunteer program – donates more than 8,000 hours of pet visitation annually; and

Whereas, the American Kennel Club has approved Fairfax Pets On Wheels as an AKC-recognized therapy dog organization;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, on behalf of all residents of Fairfax County, does hereby proclaim October 2012 as Fairfax Pets On Wheels Month in Fairfax County and does extol, thank and congratulate it on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary for outstanding and noteworthy service to older residents of Fairfax County.

## Report on the State of FPOW 2011—2012

Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc., saw yet another very busy and successful year during Program Year 2011 – 2012. I'll recap the year in brief:

*(Continued on Page 2)*

1. More than 7,600 hours of tail wagging and unconditional love were provided by over 300 volunteer teams to 14 long-term care facilities having more than 1,500 beds. During this program year we expanded by two facilities, Arleigh Burke Pavilion in McLean and Sunrise in Reston. A special thank-you to Madelynn Arnold, Deb Zelten and Kathi Baker for overseeing and implementing this monumental effort.

2. We once again had our United Way application accepted for inclusion in the United Way of the National Capital Area campaign (remember to designate 8907 when pledging).

3. We were included in the Combined Federal Campaign (designate 51148 when pledging) and the Combined Virginia Campaign (designate 8098).

4. We spoke at numerous United Way fund-raising events and had information booths at Reston Pet Fiesta; the National Capital Cat Expo; the Positive Aging Conference at the Northern Virginia Jewish Community Center; the Office of Naval Intelligence; Sheppard Center in Annandale; United Way of the National Capital Area; Vienna Office; and the Girl Scouts of America in Alexandria.

5. We hosted our 16th Annual 3K Paws for a Cause Walk in October 2011, where we raised over \$15,000 and had 226 walkers brave the weather!! Plans are well underway for our 17th Annual 3K Paws for a Cause on Sunday, October 7.

6. In June 2012 we held our 25th Anniversary and Annual Volunteer Appreciation Event in Reston at Frying Pan Farm Park. A special thank-you to Kathi Baker for planning this wonderful and memorable event, to Robin Burkett for taking the great pics for our FPOW pet trading cards and pet portraits, to King Creole Catering for great food,

and last but not never least, FPOW's official DJ Michael Galvin for providing foot-stomping and tail-wagging entertainment.

7. We awarded the Latshaw Award to long-time FPOW volunteers Joan Violate and Patricia Leader for their continuous commitment to the program. Emily Atkinson, activities director at Iliff Nursing Home, was also awarded the Latshaw for her continuous and unwavering support of FPOW and Iliff's residents.

8. The Shauna was awarded to Lolly Davidson, Jill Davidson's six pounds of pure Pomeranian panache, who visits Commonwealth Care Center AND lends her very able paws to the FPOW office!!!! Lolly has been an active volunteer since October 2007 with her spirited and elegant "twirls" and her paws-i-tively precious "high fives." Lolly delights!!!! Well done, Lolly!!!!

9. A Rally was featured and was a huge hit at this year's volunteer appreciation event!!!!!! More than 25 dog and handler teams took on the Rally course at the picnic, and they all did a fabulous job! A Rally course can contain from 10 to 20 stations. At each station the team has to perform a specified exercise. The higher you go in Rally, the more challenging the exercises become. Our 11-station course contained mostly Novice-level stations – sits, stays, various heeling exercises, and the like. Thank you, Liz Breyer, for this wonderful educational event.

10. We honored 35 Hours Award recipients: 17 Bronze recipients (50 to 74 hours), 5 Silver recipients (75 to 99 hours) and a whopping 16 Gold recipients (99-plus hours), Volunteers, job well done!!!!

11. This year being our 25th Anniversary, we also rewarded years of service. We recognized 31 for five years plus, 13 for 10 years plus, five for 15 years plus, four for 20 years plus, and three for 25 years plus.

12. The Temperament Testing Committee has continued its work on strengthening and perfecting our new canine, feline and rabbit tests. We've been working under the new testing guidelines for more than a year. During this program year alone, 147 pet teams passed temperament testing. A hat-tip to our Temperament Testers and pet teams!!!!

13. The American Kennel Club has certified FPOW as an AKC-recognized therapy dog orga-

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# Thanks for the Memory

Visit [www.fpow.org/tribute](http://www.fpow.org/tribute) to make an online memorial or tribute donation.

■ In memory of Marley, the much-loved golden retriever of Gary Leygraaf and Michelle Ellis. From Nancy Leygraaf

■ In memory of Annie, beloved companion of Pat Dutton. Annie brought countless moments of joy to the residents of Sleepy Hollow in the years she was a faithful visitor. She will be sorely missed. From Carol Chapin and Rain and Nancy McKay and Kacee

■ In memory of Tammy Lynn Levvis, the beloved daughter of Lynn Levvis and the late Bob Levvis. Tammy's love of animals and their love for her ensured that she would have a very large group waiting to accompany her across the Rainbow Bridge. From Susie and Bob Duvall

■ In honor of our beloved pets, Lulu, Remo, and Adian Ash. From James and Gina Ash, Gainesville, VA

■ In memory of Djinn and Stocky, the two beautiful horses of Kim and Mark Wilkerson. They had a very long, loving, and special life because of Kim. They will be dearly missed. From Linda Jackie

■ In memory of Tye, beloved shepherd/cross dog missed by Steve, Soline, and Olivia, his human family, and his doggie companion, Muffin. From The Wilkerson Family

■ In memory of Harriet Scott (1919-2012), Springfield, VA. From Heather Rautio, Virginia Beach, VA; Lesley Trujillo, King George, VA; and Qadeer Kahn, Herndon, VA

■ In memory of our aunt, Harriet Scott, Springfield, VA. From Cynthia DeLano, Winona, MN; Karen Howson, Hatton, ND; and Nancy Gummer, Hermiston, OR

■ In memory of Tye, beloved dog of son and his family. From Dick and Carol Jo Heald, Kennett Square, PA

■ In memory of Luna, beloved cat of Susan Heald. From Dick and Carol Jo Heald, Kennett Square, PA

nization, and as a result FPOW is listed on AKC's website, which has a link to our website. During this program year, nine FPOW canines have been certified!

14. We conducted monthly FPOW orientation sessions and temperament tests for new volunteers.

15. We sponsored our 7th Annual Pet Photo Contest, "Innocent Until Proven Guilty" – pictures are proudly displayed on our website at [www.fpow.org/photo](http://www.fpow.org/photo). The winning picture can be found on page 10.

16. We continue to recruit and train additional volunteers for the FPOW Speakers' Bureau – the FPOW-sanctioned group of qualified volunteers who speak with a united voice to represent the program and respond to a growing need for speakers on our program.

17. Kris Higgins, a graduate film student at American University, shot the short and very moving film "Almost as Much as the Dog" which captures the emotion and spirit of pet therapy.

18. We have produced a budget that not only ad-

dresses the program-year needs but also the strategic needs of the program.

19. In spite of the sluggish economy, FPOW's donations have held steady.

20. The Kiplinger Foundation awarded us a grant in the amount of \$2,500 to assist with the upgrade of the software we use to produce our newsletters and flyers!!!!

21. Are you on Facebook? Become a fan of "Fairfax Pets On Wheels." Do you "Tweet"? We "Tweet," too! Follow us @FPOWORG.

22. I would like to take a moment to remember the FPOW volunteers, pets, and longtime program supporters who traveled over the Rainbow Bridge this past year. A heartfelt Thank-You for your service and support; you will forever live in our hearts. We love you and miss you.

Program year 2011-2012 has been my fourth and final year as the president of the Board of Directors of this amazing organization. This past year we have faced multiple challenges, and we face many

## We Believe...



At West Financial Services, we believe in supporting our local community and encouraging volunteerism. That's why we proudly sponsor Fairfax Pets on Wheels in recognition of their work to improve the quality of life for Fairfax area residents of nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

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on the horizon. Our work in the community is important; our mission is to care for a population that is often given lip service but easily forgotten. We will never know the impact our visits have. I know I speak for many of us who feel that we take more away from our visits as individuals. What could be more rewarding than sharing our beloved companions', unconditional love with someone. I think this is the magic of what we do and what makes this organization thrive.

From 20 volunteers and their pets to a United Way-supported agency and an AKC-recognized therapy dog organization, our partnership with the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging continues to serve as a model for volunteer community-based organizations.

I would like to extend a very special thank-you to the 2011/2012 Board of Directors. So much was accomplished these past four years! We took on project after project after project. Each and every time you all stepped up to the plate and consistently hit home run after home run. I worried constantly about overwhelming people and burning them out. I stretched this board to its limit, and

not one member flinched. The educational initiatives, the progress on policies and procedures, and the change of venue for the volunteer appreciation event were all met with great success. Make no mistake, this was one heck of an outstanding board. "Thank you" seems inadequate.

To all the volunteers who serve on committees, (Merchandise, Office, Speakers' Bureau, Paws for a Cause, Picnic, Temperament Testing, Nominating, Annual Photo Fund Raiser), we are blessed that you have stepped up to the plate and are grateful for all you do. Thank you.

To all the facility liaisons and alternate facility liaisons, as the crucial link in the program; our facilities; our volunteers; the Board of Directors; and the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, without you we would not be in 14 facilities. Complementing the Temperament Testers, you are expected to ensure that potential volunteers are suitable in our facility settings. We expect you to wear many hats with a bag of tricks to handle every kind of situation and volunteer, human and four-legged. You do so, ultimately doing us proud.

To all the FPOW visiting teams, human and most especially our furry friends, whether you give one hour or 10 hours a month, never underestimate the impact of your presence in the lives of the residents of the long-term care facilities. You have made someone's day brighter, been the highlight of their week, and made them realize they are not forgotten. The good our furry friends do cannot be measured in dollars and cents. Your caring presence is the reason we have a waiting list of facilities wanting our wonderful program.

To the staff of the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging Volunteer Solutions Unit and the Ombudsman Program, our 20-plus-year partnership with you as you provide services to the residents of Fairfax County serves as a tremendous point of pride—that, as citizens of this community, we can share in the responsibility of helping those who are less fortunate than we are, who find themselves without the comfort and love that a wagging tail can produce. Your dedication to public service and volunteers is

vital to our success and the health and welfare of our community.

To the staff and volunteers at Volunteer Fairfax, thank you so very much for your support of our program. Each and every time we have a need, you answer the call for assistance.

A special thank-you to Laurie Stone, Kim Wilkerson and Kathy Georgen, CPA, for heading up our United Way application efforts this past year.

As FPOW celebrates our 25th Anniversary, we face new challenges, but we are well-poised to continue to grow, serve, and meet the challenges ahead. Our program is a bright shining light of exactly what works when like-minded people and pets step up to serve their community.

I'm looking forward to passing the gavel over to my good friend, Madelynn Arnold. Her steadfast leadership style and vision and goals for FPOW's continued success are exciting; I look forward to supporting her and the new board.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for the honor of serving you.

Submitted at the FPOW Annual Meeting on September 10, 2012

Tracy Van Duston, President, Board of Directors, Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc.



## Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Proclaims October Fairfax Pets On Wheels Month!

On Tuesday, September 25, 2012, Fairfax Pets On Wheels was honored by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors for its 25th Anniversary. In attendance were both two-legged and four-legged volunteers as well as representatives from the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, the Ombudsman Program, Iliff Nursing and Rehab Center, and Mt. Vernon Nursing Center to accept the proclamation, which was put forward by dog lover Supervisor Frey, Sully District.

Chairman Bulova commended the pets for being so well behaved – and even suggested that the coun-



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ty's Search and Rescue dogs could learn a lesson from our pets!!

After the Proclamation (see page 1) was read, Tracy Van Duston, president of the FPOW Board of Directors, offered the following remarks:

“Chairman Bulova and members of the Board of Supervisors: Good Morning. On behalf of the Fairfax Pets On Wheels Board of Directors and our volunteers, both two-legged and four-legged, thank you for this most special proclamation.

As part of our anniversary celebrating 25 years of caring and sharing in our community, today's recognition allows us the public opportunity to thank and to acknowledge the extraordinary partnership that we have enjoyed with the county through the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging's Volunteer Development Unit.



*Michelle Miller, Laura Nichols, Kim Wilkerson, Sharon Lynn and , Tracy Van Duston*

From 20 volunteers and their pets to a United Way and American Kennel Club therapy dog organization, our partnership with the Area Agency on Aging serves as a model for volunteer community-based organizations.

The hours of volunteer pet therapy services that



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we have provided to the long-term care facilities in Fairfax County over the past 25 years is worth almost \$2 million!

Our strong partnership has afforded FPOW volunteers the greatest gift a passionate pet owner could ever hope for, the ability to share our beloved best friend with others and the opportunity to give back to our amazing community.

For all this and today, we say a 'Paws-i-tively' heartfelt thank-you.”

Supervisor Gross, Mason District, commented that she had attended an FPOW event several years ago at Arden Courts Annandale. She was struck by the obvious positive effect the dogs had on the residents.

A group picture was taken, after which the supervisors interacted briefly with the dogs, giving out dog treats, before we moved on to the

reception that was held at the Government Center Conference Center.

A great way to celebrate 25 years!

Submitted by Ruth Benker



## Dates to Remember

**BOD Meeting: December 3, 2012,  
8:00pm – Leewood Nursing Home,  
Annandale**

**BOD Meeting: March 4, 2013, 8:00pm  
– Leewood Nursing Home, Annandale**

## An Open Thank-You to Kim Wilkerson

On Tuesday, September 25, 2012, the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors proclaimed October to be Fairfax Pets On Wheels Month, in honor of FPOW's 25th Anniversary. This was a big deal for an all-volunteer organization that has provided pet therapy services to the county's long-term care facilities since 1987.

I have been a member of FPOW for 20 years – the smiles, laughs, and thank-yous that I, along with my three dogs that have participated in the program, have received from the residents and their family members and staff during that time are treasures.

Kim, thank you for having the vision, leadership, and empathy to form this wonderful organization – here's to another 25 years!

Submitted by Ruth Benker



## Paws for a Cause: Poor Weather but FPOW Volunteers still came through!

Sunday, October 7, 2012 was not a pretty day. While the rain was light, this combination kept walker

participation low. Paws for a Cause was still a very successful event.

The total number of registrants was 149. On walk day, 71 of the 138 preregistered walkers attended and 13 other people decided to brave the elements and join in the fun.

FPOW had 26 great sponsors this year for a total of \$8,000 in sponsorship money. Sponsors who attended the event were Great Falls Animal Hospital, Herndon Animal Medical Center, and our special friends at Weber's Pet Supermarket.



Donations and pledges totaled more than \$1,260. Thanks to all the people who continue to show FPOW their support by participating in the Walk and gathering these needed funds.

Michael Galvin kept the event lively with his super skills and cheerful music, as our DJ. After the walkers returned, all registered participants were eligible for the many door prizes – we had lots of happy winners! Plus everyone was invited to join FPOW for a thank-you cupcake before leaving for home and getting out of the elements.

Congratulations to Lisa Jaeger and Joan Zottig, who won special prizes for bringing in pledges to FPOW. Lisa won for the highest amount of pledges, and Joan won a drawing open to all the other walkers who brought in pledges. Lisa and Joan each

received a \$50 gift certificate from Weber's Pet Supermarket.

There are many people to thank as an event like this always takes a lot of effort from dedicated volunteers.

A partial thank-you list includes Denise Elliott, Tom Birdsall, Jill Davidson, Lee Zinser, Laurie Stone, Madelynn & Bruce Arnold, Tracy Van Duston, David Folcomer, Ruth Benker, Patty Kwapniewski, Kathi & Dan Baker, Judy Mitnick, Deborah Zelten, Bonnie Mayo Burnham, Carla Graham, Clare Davidson, Amanda McGill, Tori Grauer, Debbie Swindall, Ghanana & Umamaheshwaci Madineni, Natalie Goldstein, Leo Cloutier, Kim Batchellor, and Linda Billings.

For more pictures from the walk, see page 11 and visit [www.fpow.org/events](http://www.fpow.org/events).

Submitted by Madelynn Arnold & Kim Wilkerson

## Congratulations to Katherine Hall, 2012 Scholarship Winner!

The FPOW Kim Wilkerson Founder's Award Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce the recipient of the 2012 scholarship, Katherine Hall. Kathy attends Northern Virginia Community College and is seeking her Associate of Science degree in veterinary technology. She currently works at VCA Beacon Hill Cat Hospital.

Kathy has been a licensed falconer since 2005 and a member of the Virginia Falconer's Association since 2004. Her volunteer resume includes work at veterinary clinics, assisting the homeless, and membership in the Autism Society of Northern Virginia Life-span Committee.

In the words of Dr. Nancy Suska, who recommended Kathy for the Founder's Award Scholarship "I have been able to observe the passion that she feels

about pets, their owners, and the bond that they share. This has been most evident during the unfortunate task of euthanasia." She also said "... she does understand and value the human-pet bond."



## AKC Awards Therapy Dogs

FPOW is pleased to announce these dogs have earned their AKC Therapy Dog titles!!



Let's have a big thumbs-up for:

Neely Willett – Luna, Golden Retriever

Rob and Helen Carroll – Carrie, English Shepherd

Ruth Benker – Teddy, Cavalier King Charles Spaniel

Charlie Viall – Bella, German Shepherd



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1. How long have you been training dogs? How long have you trained puppies?
2. What kinds of classes do you teach?
3. Have you put any titles on your own dogs?
4. What dog sports do you participate in or have you participated in?
5. What is your basic philosophy of training?
6. What kind of equipment will we be using in class (e.g., collars, etc.)

## How to Find a Trainer

This article appeared December 31, 2011, in Citizen Canine, the blog of the AKC Canine Good Citizen Program, [www.caninegoodcitizen.wordpress.com](http://www.caninegoodcitizen.wordpress.com), and is reprinted with permission.

In the beginning of the new year, there is an increase in calls to AKC Canine Good Citizen from puppy/dog owners looking for trainers. They want us to tell them how to find a trainer. We refer to our AKC Canine Good Citizen evaluator/instructors, but in some cases, there may be more than one person in a town from which the dog owner can choose.

We talk to the prospective new student about how important it is to find the right match; we warn against choosing a class simply based on cost or because it is nearby.

Here is a checklist we've developed for choosing a trainer:

### Choosing the Trainer for You and Your Puppy/Dog

Ask the instructor some questions. Examples of questions might include:

7. Do you use food rewards? Corrections? If so, please tell me about these.
  8. Are all sizes of puppies together? Do you have play groups?
  9. Do you know your dropout rate? How many students finish your CGC/S.T.A.R. classes?
  10. After the beginning class, do many students go on for additional training?
- Visit a puppy class and observe the instructor. What do you think about:
1. The instructor's skill level in teaching humans (adult learners).
  2. The instructor's knowledge of dogs/puppies. When you are asking the instructor questions, ask about any credentials, special certifications or training the person has. But, remember, people can pass a test and still not be able to train a dog. You'll get a lot out of the direct observation as to whether or not an instructor can teach a dog or teach a person to teach a dog.
  3. The instructor's communication style with students – pleasant, reinforcing vs. bossy and sarcastic.
  4. Organization of the class. How long on each topic, how many students/puppies/dogs?

5. Curriculum – does it teach all you want to learn?
6. Do the puppies/dogs look happy, eager to learn vs. bored or nervous?
7. Do the human students look happy, eager to work, or frustrated?
8. Instruction is presented and sequenced so that students and dogs are having success.
9. Teaching methods – do you spend all the time listening to the instructor talk or is this an active learning class?
10. The instructor’s ability to handle any behavior problems or student questions.

To find an AKC S.T.A.R. Puppy or CGC trainer near you, see [www.akc.org/events/cgc/cgc\\_bystate.cfm](http://www.akc.org/events/cgc/cgc_bystate.cfm).

## Dog Coffee Fund Raiser

Once again, Tracy Welch, with the helping paws of Kate and volunteers at Iliff, held a “Dog Coffee Fund Raiser” on September 7 to raise pledges for the FPOW Paws for a Cause 3K. Good food, great coffee, and tasty treats awaited the two-legged and four-legged guests.



The dog bowl in the middle of the spread piled up with donations during the gathering, netting a total of \$160! Way to go Tracy and Kate, and many thanks for a job well done!



Submitted by Ruth Benker

## 7th Annual Pet Photo Contest Winner!

Photo Contest Theme: Innocent Until Proven Guilty

1st Place: “I didn’t do it”  
Vladimir, by Deborah Zelten



Thanks to the judges from *Kiplinger’s Personal Finance* magazine’s circulation/sales department.

To see all of the winners, visit [www.fpow.org/photo](http://www.fpow.org/photo).



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# Pictures from the 17th Annual Paws for a Cause 3K Walk

For a full slideshow of pics, visit [www.fpow.org/events](http://www.fpow.org/events)





## Are A Breed Apart

Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc.  
Fairfax Area Agency on Aging  
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Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc., is a volunteer program working with the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, 12011 Government Center Parkway, #708, Fairfax, VA 22035-1104. FPOW Volunteer Hotline: (703) 324-5424. Visit [www.fpow.org](http://www.fpow.org)  
Please use the FPOW Hotline number for nonemergency calls if you are an FPOW volunteer or currently in the pipeline. Someone will either act on your message or return your call if more information is required.

## DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT FPOW NEWSLETTER: December 31, 2012

### FAIRFAX PETS ON WHEELS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Executive Committee:

President – Madelynn Arnold

Vice President/Dir. of Administration – Bonnie Mayo Burnham

Treasurer – Helen Carroll

Secretary – Laurie Stone

### DIRECTORS

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Director, Volunteer Development – Nikki DiPalma

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Director, Volunteer Appreciation – Kathi Baker

Director, Volunteer Education – Deborah Zelten

Director, Fund Development – Judy Mitnick

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Director at Large – Sheila Consaul

Director at Large – Colleen Nassetta

Newsletter Committee Chairman: Kim Wilkerson;

Editor: Denise Elliott

### EDITORIAL POLICY

This is your newsletter. Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc., volunteers may contribute articles for publication. Articles will be reviewed by the editors. We reserve the right to edit any item submitted for publication. We cannot guarantee the return of documents or photos (if used). Because Fairfax Pets On Wheels, Inc., is under the sponsorship of the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, the FPOW Newsletter must be approved by the FAAA prior to publication. Letters to the editor are welcome and encouraged. Letters must be signed but, if requested, your name will be withheld.

All correspondence should be directed to:

Fairfax Area Agency on Aging

Attention: FPOW Newsletter

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Fairfax, VA 22035-1104

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Email:

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