



During a tour of the [Goochland County Animal Shelter and Adoption Center](#) this month, a two-pound rescue Yorkie mix named Junie nearly made her way into Laura's purse. (Because apparently eight rescue cats at home is not enough.)

Junie had been brought in to be euthanized, the result of cruel breeding, but the vet could not do it, and the vet tech took her home instead. By the time we met her, she was already adopted and safe.

Here is something most people who rescue animals don't know about themselves:

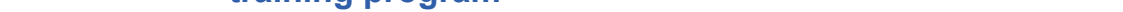
**They are doing violence prevention work.**



In the field it's called "[The Link](#)," the well-documented connection between cruelty to animals and violence toward people. Animal welfare workers and domestic violence advocates increasingly train side by side because they are often serving the same families, just through different doors.

**The mom with the stray cat does not have a logic model. The vet tech is not thinking, "I am interrupting generational violence."**

But they are. And once you see it that way, you start to see it everywhere.



**Good does not always look like a policy or a training program**

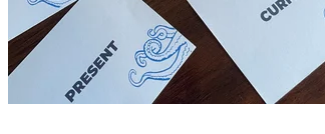
Sometimes it looks like the My Voice, My Choice facilitators we trained this month, learning how to teach adults with disabilities that their bodies and their consent belong to them.



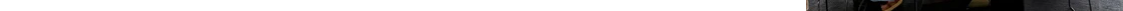
Sometimes it looks like the Richmond Behavioral Health Foundation board, doing the quiet interior work of real governance at their May retreat, holding a mission in trust for a community they will mostly never meet.



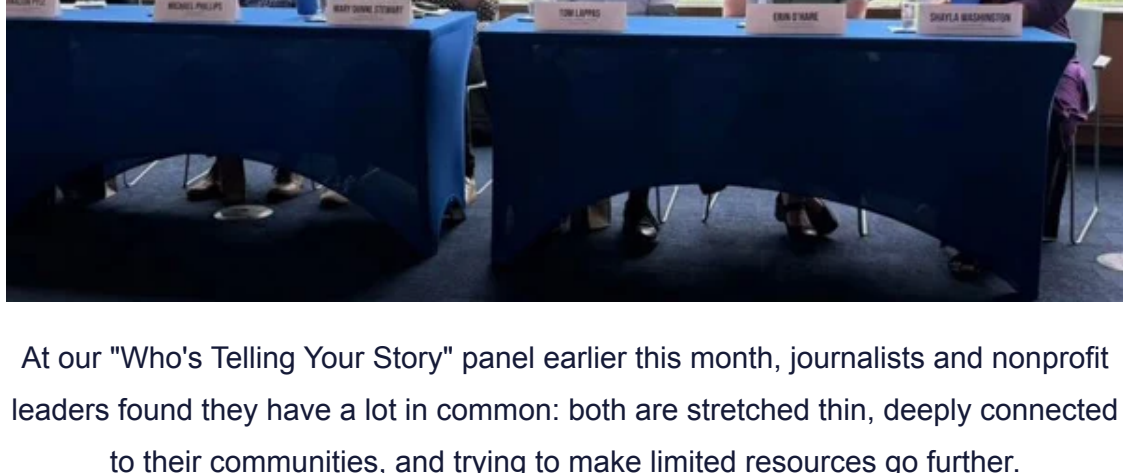
Sometimes it looks like the local journalists at our "Who's Telling Your Story" panel, talking about the trusted relationships between newsrooms and the communities they cover.



None of that looks like a strategy. **It looks like people being good to each other on purpose.** Which, it turns out, is also what we call prevention.



**tips from the panel**



At our "Who's Telling Your Story" panel earlier this month, journalists and nonprofit leaders found they have a lot in common: both are stretched thin, deeply connected to their communities, and trying to make limited resources go further.

A few takeaways worth keeping:

**Start with the human story.** Reporters are drowning in data. Lead with a real person and tailor your story to the audience you're pitching.

**Focus on relevance, not promotion.** The strongest pitches connect to a larger issue, trend, or community impact.

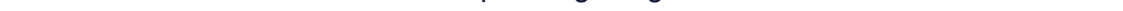
**Build relationships before you need coverage.** The best media relationships are ongoing, not transactional. Consume local media yourself, know which reporters cover issues connected to your work, and ask what they are looking for.

**You have about four seconds.** Get to the point quickly and make it easy to understand why the story matters now.

**Be a fierce advocate for your story.** If you know you have a strong one, do not stop at one "no." Find the right reporter, the right outlet, or the right angle.



**across the commonwealth**



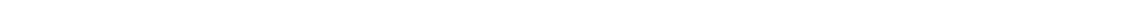
**HB353 is now law.** Governor Spanberger signed House Bill 353 this month, allowing 501(c)(3) organizations to sponsor health benefits consortia so nonprofits can pool risk and offer more affordable coverage to their employees. A real win for nonprofit workforce stability, especially for small and mid-sized organizations. Effective July 1. [Read more from CNE.](#)

**Virginia is one of just five states selected for the 2026 Google News Initiative State News Sustainability Accelerator.** A significant moment for local news across the Commonwealth and a step forward for the kind of newsroom-community partnerships our panelists were talking about. [More from the Virginia Local News Project.](#)

**A Blacksburg-based nonprofit, The Secular Society, eliminated more than \$51 million in medical debt** for 35,007 Southwest Virginia residents this month, buying the debt in bulk through a partnership with Undue Medical Debt. Quiet, structural good. [Read the story.](#)



**from BOC**



**The Grant Whisperer: Office Hours | Thursday, July 30 | 3–5 PM**  
Bring your questions and that draft proposal you have been avoiding for a hands-on working session. Development strategist Zach Kopciak will focus on stronger storytelling and standing out in an increasingly competitive funding landscape. [Register through The Current.](#)

**Prevention Collaborative | Friday, August 7 | 10:00 AM**  
Our quarterly gathering for nonprofit leaders, advocates, and community members thinking creatively about preventing violence through connection and outside-the-box solutions. Email Laura at [laura@blueoctopus.consulting](mailto:laura@blueoctopus.consulting) to join.



**🐙 what's in the net?**

Noah Kahan's new album, The Great Divide. Driving-around-with-the-windows-down music for May.

Jars of wildflowers on porches and counters. Somebody walked, picked, put them in water, and set them where someone else would see them. A small kindness in glass.

**Try this: name one person in your life doing the quiet work and tell them you see it.**



**from the team at blue octopus. eight cats. no regrets. one yorkie short.**