



# Natasha's Story

(GCCR #413)

by Michelle Riportella



"Heaven help the little Cavaliers who call for help and no one comes." Many times GCCR has taken in Cavaliers who have been discarded due to serious health issues that others are unable or unwilling to deal with. We are passionate about helping all Cavaliers in need, but especially the ones whose cries have gone unanswered. The story of Natasha portrays just one of the many examples of needy Cavaliers who would have died had GCCR not stepped in.

When Natasha arrived in August of 2013, she was diagnosed with Supraventricular Tachycardia (SVT) and severe Mitral Valve Regurgitation (MVR). Her abnormal heartbeat was sending excessive blood flow into her heart's chambers causing it to overwork. Doctors had stated that Natasha's heart was the largest they had seen in a dog her size. Her prognosis was not encouraging. Because her serious condition required constant monitoring and costly medications, GCCR decided to place Natasha as a permanent foster with Dan and Tammy Ford.



Anyone who knows Dan and Tammy, knows they are loving and giving people who represent GCCR in a remarkable selfless way. Natasha was certainly in the best of hands. The Fords chauffeured Natasha to routine vet appointments as well as regular visits to her cardiologist for lengthy four- to six-hour monitoring sessions. At home, Dan diligently administered her required medications three times a day. With each visit to the cardiologist, Natasha showed improvement.



In late September 2015 – two years after coming to GCCR – Natasha went for her routine monitoring session with Dr. Luethy, a cardiologist familiar with many GCCR rescues. After reviewing her results, Dr. Luethy felt Natasha's SVT and severe MVR had improved so significantly that he discontinued two of her medications. He also declared she no longer needed the lengthy monitoring sessions. In time, under her doctors' supervision, the Ford's care, and with proper medication, Natasha's heart had shrunk by half its size!

Natasha is still taking two medications – diltiazem to control her heart rate and abnormal rhythm, and Vetmedin to improve her heart's ability to pump. She will continue to see her vet and Dr. Luethy for regular visits and tests. But she has come a long way from the seriously ill pup she was two years ago.

A big thank you goes out to Dan and Tammy for making a difference in Natasha's life and giving her the best care and love possible. Natasha is one lucky (and healthier) little girl!



Natasha  
and siblings