

4 PAWS PRESS

ISSUE #19 WINTER 2006

LIFE SHOULD NOT END AT TEN

IN OUR SOCIETY, we don't just toss aside our seniors. We are taught to respect our elders for their wisdom and experience. So too, should senior felines be revered and welcomed into a new home. Unfortunately, it is more of the rare exception that an older cat gets adopted.

People tend to choose younger cats saying they want to enjoy the companionship of their new pets for years to come... not be faced with high medical costs right away...they want to enjoy the youth and vitality of their new pets. All valid expectations, but what are they missing by overlooking senior felines as potential new family members?

An indoor cat lives on average 15-20 years. So, even a cat into his teen years can have several more years of loving companionship left to give. There are also no guarantees that a young cat will live to a ripe old age. Wouldn't a cat that had already lived several healthy years be a good bet to have more healthy years ahead?

It's true that end of life care can be costly, both financially and emotionally, but a long drawn out illness is not inevitable. Nor is youth a guarantee of many healthy years to come. Unfortunately, young cats can often have their lives cut short by disease, illness, or accident.

Youth and the energetic excitement that comes with it are not necessarily the characteristics that make the best companions for everyone. A mature cat will have left behind his crazy days of knocking things over and dashing around the house. Older adults tend to be more settled in their routines. They are less likely

to make a mess, get under foot, or engage in destructive behavior. Seniors are often happiest just curling up with their people, spending many contented hours purring, cuddling, and being loved.

No one expects to be outlived by their pet, but it does happen. It should not be the fate of a faithful companion that his life end, figuratively or literally, when his owner dies. Don't these senior cats deserve to live out their final years (in many cases still having several years of vitality remaining) surrounded by love and companionship? Who better to provide

devoted friendship to a senior person than a mature cat?

Following are some 4Paws senior cats. Won't you please give one of them an opportunity to live the second half of his life in comfort, being adored and loved?

Cody (F declawed): Recently lost her home of 9 years when an elderly asthmatic relative moved into her house. Cody is very affectionate and talkative. Her ideal home is one where she will not have to compete with another cat for her owner's attention. She gets along with dogs.

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FOSTER A CAT

BEFORE YOU BEGIN listing reasons why you think you can't foster a homeless cat, let me explain why you can.

To foster, all you need is a spare room where a foster cat can stay separated from your other pets. Don't worry about how your current pets will get along with the visitor because it's best for all, not to even bother introducing them. Introductions can be stressful under any circumstances; there is no reason to put your pets or foster cat through this strain



and anxiety (especially since your foster cat is just visiting for a temporary time—until he finds a permanent home).

In most cases, your foster cat will have recently come from a stressful, possibly even threatening situation. Maybe his owners abandoned him outside or, worse, left him behind in an empty house. Or perhaps he came from a shelter where he narrowly escaped euthanasia. While healing physically and emotionally from his recent upheaval and trauma, your foster cat will need his own room—a space where he can feel safe and in control.

Now you know that you can foster. Next question—what does it mean to foster? As a foster volunteer you provide care and temporary shelter for a homeless adult cat, a few kittens, or a mother cat and her babies. Cats and kittens rescued by 4Paws are examined by a vet, given appropriate vaccines, treated for fleas/worms, and tested for FIV and FeLV before being placed into foster homes.

You provide food, shelter, and love; 4Paws pays for pre-authorized vet care

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4Paws Press is published by the 4Paws Rescue Team, Inc. P.O. Box 2908, Merrifield, VA 22116 (703) 715-MEOW (voice) (703) 560-9795 (fax) info@fourpaws.org www.fourpaws.org

CFC #7540

The 4Paws Rescue Team is a non-profit, community-based volunteer organization that takes in neglected, abandoned, abused and unwanted cats and kittens, finding them permanent loving homes. An animal rescued by 4Paws will never be euthanized except out of medical necessity. In addition, 4Paws is dedicated to managing the populations and improving the health of feral cat colonies. 4Paws also works with schools to teach children the importance of responsible pet care.

4Paws Rescue Team Officers

Barbara Lipson, president
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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

WHERE DID SO MANY CATS COME FROM? If you've ever been to a 4Paws adoption fair, you undoubtedly have asked this very question. Looking around in amazement you would have seen row after row of tables stacked with cages; each cage filled with homeless cats or kittens vying for adoptive homes. At the height of kitten season, the average adoption fair showcases between 100 and 150 baby kittens, teenagers, and adult cats.

So where do all of these homeless cats come from? The more fortunate ones are formerly loved pets that could no longer be cared for by their owners. Many ending up in overcrowded animal shelters, but were lucky enough that shelter workers were able to make arrangements with 4Paws.

The many cats and kittens you see at a 4Paws adoption fair represent only a small fraction of the homeless pet population in this area. When one unspayed female and her offspring can reproduce almost 400,000 cats during a 7 year period, it is obvious that the problem is out of control.

The difficult reality is that our animal shelters cannot possibly provide sanctuary for all the homeless strays, abandoned felines, and former pets in our area. 4Paws volunteers work tirelessly taking in strays and removing from shelters cats and kittens for which we can properly care, given our limited resources. This year, 4Paws expects to place 400 previously homeless felines into permanent loving homes. Since inception in 1995, we have found homes for more than 5,500 cats and kittens.

Unfortunately, it is not as simple as taking homeless cats from the shelters and finding them permanent homes. Many, if not most, of the cats rescued by 4Paws, whether from shelters or directly from alleys and sewers, need to heal before they can be adopted into loving homes. Some ailments are physical while others are emotional and the healing takes its toll. As an all-volunteer organization, we do what we can with the volunteer and financial resources available to us.

What happens when the shelters become overcrowded? If 4Paws or similar organizations can't help out, friendly, healthy, adoptable cats and kittens are *killed* in order to make room for new arrivals. Every day, workers in local animal shelters right here in the DC metro area are forced to decide which animals will live and which will die. It's a horrible situation.

So, what can be done? In the short term, you can help 4Paws save as many cats and kittens as possible. Make a donation, offer to foster or adopt a new furry family member into your home. Even with an all-volunteer work force with no rent to pay, it costs 4Paws \$120,000 to operate for one year. Most of our budget goes toward vet fees and medical supplies. And the \$85 adoption fee charged for an adult cat only covers half of the cost to ready a healthy cat for adoption. Any contribution that you make will be a welcomed help.

To foster all you need is an empty room and a lot of love. Any cat or kitten that you are able to take into your home on a temporary basis is one less cat perishing in a shelter or on the streets. Or maybe you prefer to give the ultimate gift—a loving permanent home to a stray or abandoned cat. However you choose to help, it will be greatly appreciated, most especially by the furry guys whose lives you save.

Of course the longer term solution—the ultimate solution—is spaying and neutering. If you have an unneutered pet, please have that pet sterilized as soon as possible. If all of your pets are fixed—thank you—and please spread the word to your family, friends, co-workers. Spaying and neutering is the only way to stop the suffering. Just by spaying one female cat, you can prevent the births and unnecessary deaths of thousands of cats.

Do what you can, but please do something. Feline lives depend on it.

DONATE TO 4PAWS
Support our effort to help homeless cats:
Online at www.paypal.com
Login, select "Send Money"
Enter recipient's email:
info@fourpaws.org
Donate to 4Paws using your credit card
By mail send checks to
4Paws Rescue Team
P.O. Box 2908
Merrifield, VA 22116



DEBUNKING MYTHS ABOUT CATS AND LITTER BOXES

There is little more frustrating than a cat not using his litter box. Shelters report that litter box problems are the number one reason owners give up their pets. Improper elimination does not have to be a death sentence. This overview discusses various medical conditions that cause cats to urinate outside the litterbox.

First and foremost is the all important question—“is the source of the problem medical or behavioral?” Often a medical problem is mislabeled behavioral and so not only are the proper steps *not* taken to remedy the situation, but the cat continues to suffer with pain or chronic discomfort.

Most litter box issues can be traced back to a medical problem. Believe this fact, know it—and you are on your way to a solution. Medical problems that cause inappropriate elimination cannot be diagnosed with a phone call to your vet or even an office exam. For a proper diagnosis, your vet needs to collect a urine sample and run an analysis. Some medical conditions may not be uncovered with a urinalysis, but certainly, this should be the first step.

Myth #1: I know the problem isn't medical because sometimes my cat does use the litter box. Logically, it might seem that a cat isn't sick if sometimes she uses the litter box and other times she does not. This must indicate a behavioral choice—right? Wrong—intermittent litter box use is actually a classic sign of an underlying medical problem. Out in the wild, burying waste is a survival technique to avoid detection by predators. Driven by instinct, it is natural for a cat to eliminate in a litter box.

A conflict occurs when the cat starts associating the litter box with the pain or discomfort caused by a medical condition. When this happens, she may start to avoid the litter box, thinking the box itself is the source of the discomfort. In this conflict between pain and instinct, the pain may not be strong enough to always deter litter box use—leading to intermittent use. Or maybe it is a question of timing—since the litter box is associated with pain, if she happens upon a soft place in the laundry basket she may simply use this new spot that does not have a history of causing pain.

Myth #2: It can't be a medical problem—my cat has been eliminating outside the litter box on and off for years.

Some medical conditions do not cause constant pain. Urinary crystals, bladder stones and interstitial cystitis are some of the more common conditions that can cause flare ups of discomfort leading to improper elimination. Even the most attentive of owners may dismiss an occasional transgression outside the litter box as an accident instead of a potential medical problem. Some medical issues worsen with time, so an occasional elimination outside the box could turn into a more frequent problem. It may seem that your cat's behavioral problem is just getting worse, but it's more likely a medical problem that has deteriorated over time. Give your cat the benefit of the doubt—take him to the vet for a urinalysis and any necessary follow up tests.

Myth #3: My vet analyzed a urine sample and didn't find anything, so the problem is behavioral, not medical. Not every medical problem will manifest in a cat's urine. Usually urinary crystals will show up in an afflicted cat's urine, but not always. Sometimes crystals accumulate in the bladder, never passing into the urine. In these cases, sludge or stones may form in the bladder, causing irritation and pain during urination. Ultrasound is the best diagnostic for identifying this condition, but some stones can be seen by x-ray.

Chronic infection in the urinary tract often is not readily apparent and may not show up at all on a urinalysis. Culture and sensitivity analysis would be the next step to identify the problem. The culture will grow any bacteria present so that it can be identified and the sensitivity analysis will assist in identifying the correct antibiotic for treatment.

Kidney disease can also lead to improper elimination. Some medical conditions causing a cat to go outside his litter box are not even directly related to the urinary tract system. Diabetes, constipation, and arthritis are examples of conditions that may manifest in the early stages with improper elimination. In these situations, blood tests, x-rays or other diagnostics may be necessary to properly identify the medical cause of the unwanted behavior.

While elimination outside the litter box is likely a warning of an underlying medical condition, do not assume that if your cat continues to faithfully use his litter box that he is healthy. There are other clues that should alert you to a potential medical problem. Frequently urinating in small amounts; going in and out of the litter box without using it; and crying out in pain when trying to urinate—these are all signs of serious medical conditions calling for immediate vet attention. Catching these problems early can be the difference between a minor problem and a chronic or even life threatening situation. 🐾

LITTER BOX SOLUTIONS (NON-MEDICAL)

After medical problems associated with urination outside the litter box have been thoroughly investigated and ruled out, then it is time to look into behavioral causes. First, understand that your cat's actions are not an expression of spite or anger. It's easy to feel personally attacked when your cat urinates on the carpet, but it is important to remember that cats are driven by instinct, not emotion. There is an environmental trigger to your cat's behavior and you need to patiently work through the possibilities in order to resolve the problem. Ask the following questions:

- Is the litter box conveniently located?
- Is the litter box placed in a quiet, easily accessible and temperate location?
- Is the litter scented? Does it feel comfortable to the step?
- Would your cat prefer a covered box (or does he have a covered box and might prefer one that is uncovered)?
- Have you provided enough litter boxes (one per cat plus one additional box)?
- Are litter boxes provided on different floors of the house (so your cat does not need to travel too far to get to a box)?
- Is the litter box thoroughly cleaned and filled with clean litter every few weeks?
- Is there a bully pet in the house that attacks your cat when he uses the litter box?
- Is there too much or too little litter in your cat's box?

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FELINE TALES WITH HAPPY ENDINGS

Rescued from a DC alley in Winter 2003, Carys (formerly **Hermoine**) is now a cherished companion, "...It has been two years, and I can truly say that she is one of the most special 'people' in my life. I am so glad that I have been able to give her a good home, and I have been rewarded a thousand times over with the joy she brings to my everyday life. I will always remember 4Paws as the organization that opened up my heart to the wonderful world of pet parenting!"
–Kelly N.

Taken by his former owners to the vet for euthanasia (he wasn't fitting into their house), **Gabrielle** was lucky enough to be rescued by a 4Paws volunteer in 2004 and then adopted into his forever-home. "Gabrielle...remains the best and most fun cat that I've ever had and is a joy to have around. He has so settled into this home that it seems to both of us that he's always been here. He continues to wake me up every morning with a series of sloppy, wet kisses and all the affection he loves to give." –Bob L.



Willow (above), the orneriest kitten in her litter, writes about her new home, "When I was a kitten, I didn't much like to be held by humans, though I always liked to be petted. Well, that has changed. If my human has been out, I love to have her pick me up and hug me. Sometimes I crawl on her lap or shoulder so she will pet me." –Paula H.



Dottie (above), originally adopted out as a kitten, was returned to 4Paws 7 years later when she became inconvenient. She was fortunate enough to get a wonderful second chance, "we just adopted Dottie...last weekend. Thank you for rescuing her; she is wonderful and gets along well with our other (senior) cat." –Carol M.

Carmel and **Butterscotch** are siblings that were adopted into the same home a few weeks apart. "We reunited the sisters...you would have thought WWIII had started. You would not have thought they were siblings, which was very surprising to us as we had seen them together (at the adoption fair)...and they were getting along well. Anyway, fast forward to the weekend, things have really settled down and they appear to be over the posturing and noise making. They are now eating side by side without any noise or sign of aggression." –John and Leslie S.


Oscar and Marcus (formerly **Wilde**) were tiny kittens when rescued from a high kill shelter in southern Maryland. Oscar writes about his new home, "Marcus and I are having loads of fun! I was a little shy for about an hour. Marcus, being the adventurer, scoped out the place and let me know it was okay. We have 4 flights of stairs to run up and down...there are many things to jump on. We try to get our sleep during the day while our human is at work so we can keep her up at night. (Still) she thinks we are the cutest things...and we indulge her by letting her hold us like a baby and purring." –Ellen G.

Timmy, rescued from a make-shift shelter after Hurricane Katrina, got his second chance and is making the most of it. "Timmy's a wonderful guy—full of spirit, confidence, sensitivity, curiosity, intelligence and a *tremendous* appetite! He gets along super well with the dogs and is slowly toning down his enthusiasm to become a member of the feline family." –Millie B.

Precious (formerly **Erika**) and Princess (formerly **Bianca**) came from different litters, but their adopters wanted two so they could keep each other company. "I wouldn't have it any other way. They are great company for each other and for Charlie and me. Plus, it's fun to observe and learn about their different personalities. We have one kitten that loves to play A LOT (Precious) and one (Princess) that's more laid back...loving to stretch out and relax...in my lap and put her head on my arm." –Lori P

Shannon (formerly **Missy**) and **Chessie** were adopted five years ago. "My (girls) continue to be the cat loves of my life. Shannon would sit on my lap all day long if I did not have other things I had to do. My Chessie still has moments when I can tell she wishes to be left alone, but the times that she snuggles make those other times worth it." –Jessica H.

After his first adoptive home did not work out, **Henry** was returned to 4Paws. He has since been adopted to a family where he fits right in. "From the first moment he walked into the house, he made it his own. He sprawled on the floor unafraid of the 50 pound border collie who wanted to play. He seems to fit in just like he has always been there. He loves the chaos of family and pets." –Kathy R.

Two of six born to a stray cat abandoned outside, Lily (formerly **Misty**) and Nasey (formerly **Missy**) have hit the jackpot, "our favorite part...has been watching their personalities develop—even though they are sisters, they are so different from one another! Lily is the bigger, more subdued one...she definitely loves to eat. Nasey is our little talker; she loves to play...I grew up with cats in my family, but I had no idea how meaningful it could be to have cats as an adult." –Laura B. 



LITTER BOX SOLUTIONS continued from page 3

Remember, each cat is an individual. Some cats will avoid a litter box with litter that is only slightly scented. Others will not be deterred by a scent. Some cats enjoy digging into a couple of inches of litter, while others need much less litter, preferring to feel the bottom of the box with their paws. Above all, be open-minded. Entertain the possibility that (gradually) changing the litter, adding a box, or investigating alternative litter box locations may solve the problem—even if your cat has always used a certain brand of litter or a certain type of box in a certain location without any previous problems.

Today there are many products designed to encourage your cat to practice appropriate litter box habits. A whole array of different types of litter exist—some made from biodegradable products such as corn, pine or wheat, providing a variety of textures and smells from which your cat can choose. There are also litters specifically formulated to draw your cat to the box (i.e., Cat Attract Litter).

Improper elimination can be a statement by your pet that he does not like a brand of litter, a type of litter box or its location. Litter box problems can also be the consequence of your cat's insecurities or changes in the environment. Cats are creatures of habit; they do not adapt easily to change. Felines are comfortable in spaces that are familiar to them and scent is the primary mechanism that cats use to create familiarity.

Cats have scent glands in their cheeks and in the first digits of their claws. They deposit scent by rubbing a target object. If items are moved or removed or new objects are brought in, your cat may feel anxious or disconcerted. To bring back a feeling of safety and comfort, your cat may feel it necessary to make an emergency deposit of his scent—by urinating.

While extremely undesirable to you, it is important that you understand scent marking for what it is—a way for cats to recognize and feel comfortable in their environment. To avoid problems, make changes gradually or gradually introduce your cat to the changes. A new baby, house guests, new carpet, a new pet...these are all changes that can trigger insecurities in your pet.

If gradual introduction does not sufficiently reduce your pet's stress, there are products designed to comfort your cat. Rescue Remedy is a Bach Flower Essence available at Whole Foods and other health food stores. A few drops in your cat's water and rubbed onto his ears a few times a day should help to calm him, making changes easier to accept.

Another product, Feliway, contains a formula that mimics feline facial pheromones, creating the same sensation of calm and comfort as when a cat rubs his cheek against the furniture or corners of a room. Feliway comes as a spray or plug-in air diffuser, brand name Comfort Zone. The spray is useful for smaller spaces such as cat carriers or bedding while the diffuser should be used to affect an entire room.

No matter the cause of the inappropriate behavior, it is extremely important to properly clean any spot where your cat has urinated. A cat's sense of smell is ten times more sensitive than that of a dog. So even if you can't smell anything, your cat may still be able to pick up the scent of urine. And that scent will attract him to eliminate in the same spot again.

To break the cycle you need to clean the spot using an enzyme cleaner specifically formulated to remove pet stains and odors. Nature's Miracle and Urine Gone are two of the many products with enzyme action designed to eliminate pet urine odor. Whichever product you choose, it is important to follow the directions exactly as indicated on the label.

If the problem still persists after you have tried the suggestions in this article, it may be time to consult a professional. It's possible that you are too close to the situation—maybe you don't see the trigger because you aren't objective. An animal behaviorist may be able to provide the insight and solution that you need.

Most important—be positive; there is an environmental trigger causing your cat to urinate outside his litter box. He is not doing this to spite you; he is trying to tell you something. The problem is one of communication and understanding. Don't blame your cat, learn to think like him. Once you start to understand the source of the behavior, you can work to resolve the litter box problems. 🐾

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

The 4Paws Rescue Team is run entirely by volunteers. Different activities require varying degrees of commitment. In as little as thirty minutes a week, you can make a significant contribution. If you are interested in any of the following opportunities please call (703) 715-6369 (or email info@fourpaws.org):

• **Adoption Fair Assistant.** At adoption fairs, held on Saturdays, volunteers talk to potential adopters about general cat care, and help them handle the adoptable cats. At the end of the day, volunteers help dismantle the cages and clean up.

• **Adoption Fair Set Up.** Volunteers set up cages the Friday night before an adoption fair. Set up usually starts at 7 p.m. and lasts an hour.

• **Follow Up Calls.** Volunteers contact recent adopters to ensure their cat has transitioned smoothly to its new home. Potential problems and suggested resolutions are discussed with new volunteers.

• **Home Visits.** Volunteers set up appointments with adopters to visit their homes and pets. New volunteers are trained on appropriate responses to questions that may arise. Visits are limited to the requested geographic location.

• **Store Volunteer.** An individual commits to care for the cats in a Petco store, one evening or morning each week. Each volunteer provides food/water, scoops litter, and cleans cages at the store of their choice. We are currently most desperate for morning volunteers.

IS YOUR 4PAWS CAT A STAR?

We are now accepting photos for the 2008 calendar. Send yours in before space runs out. Mail photos in color or black & white to 4Paws, P.O. Box 2908, Merrifield, VA 22116. Or, email high resolution images to: info@fourpaws.org.

Images chosen will have good contrast, contain only animals (no people), and contain at least one 4Paws cat in the image. Please include your name and your cat's 4Paws name (if known) with the submission. Sorry, we can't return pictures. 🐾



LIFE

continued from cover

Irene (F declawed): After 7 years, work and lifestyle changes made her former living situation unworkable. Irene is a perfect lady. She is gentle, quiet, unobtrusive...happy to sit with her person for hours on end. Irene should be adopted into a home without other pets...a quiet home with an older person would be ideal.

Rafael (M DLH): He lost his home when the house was condemned and the residents (human and 40+ felines) were evicted. Rafael is playful, but not dominant. A nice boy who seeks out other cats, Rafael may take some time to warm up to new people. Rafael would make a terrific companion for another cat. He is not the tidiest cat—when he eats, Rafael pushes his face all the way into his wet food. So a home with a cat that can help Rafael with hygiene would be ideal.

Rocco (M DSH): After Rocco's owners died, their adult children could not care for him and took Rocco to a local shelter. While Rocco does not have the physical presence he once had, he still projects an air of majestic authority. He fancies himself a tough guy, but Rocco is really a soft touch who wants a comfortable lap attached to a loving person. Rocco prefers a home where he is the only pet, but he could cohabitate with other cats as long as they left his wet food alone.

Tessa (F DSH): Originally adopted out by 4Paws as a kitten, 8 years later her family took her to the shelter before moving. A very sweet girl, Tessa has a lot of affection to give and loves to receive it back. She is gentle and, though, tentative at first, warms up to people eventually meowing quite insistently for attention. Tessa would be happy in a home with another gentle cat or where she was the only pet.



Yuki (M declawed): Pictured above, Yuki was taken to an animal shelter when his owner of 10 years, complied with his new wife's wishes to 'get rid of the cat.' Scheduled for death, Yuki found his way into a 4Paws foster home in the nick of time. While still healing from the abandonment he suffered, underneath it all, Yuki craves human companionship. With patience and time, Yuki will become a loving and devoted pet. He needs a home without other pets.

Please visit www.fourpaws.org for photos and more detailed information on 4Paws' seniors. 🐱

FOSTER A CAT

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at a participating animal hospital that is conveniently located near your home or office. You transport your foster cat to and from adoption fairs, which are generally held once or twice a month at Petco stores in Northern Virginia.

Is it too much to ask—an empty room, love and attention, patience and kindness? It takes so little to save a feline life. But the rewards are amazing. You will watch your foster kittens grow and their personalities develop. When fostering an abandoned cat, you will see him gain strength and confidence. Right before your eyes, he will emerge from a scrawny, cowering bundle of fur into a handsome, affectionate cat. And when he gets adopted—though letting him go will be difficult—you will feel pride and overwhelming joy for this little guy who surely would have died without your intervention.

PLEASE, if you have that spare room, a little extra time, and a lot of love to give, call us at (703) 715-6369 or email info@fourpaws.org to find out more about becoming a foster volunteer. 🐱

ADOPTION FAIR SCHEDULE

Saturday, December 2	Fairfax Petco
Saturday, December 16	Fairfax Petco
Saturday, January 6	Tysons Petco
Saturday, January 27	Fairfax Petco
Saturday, February 17	Tysons Petco
Saturday, March 10	Fairfax Petco
Saturday, March 31	Tysons Petco
Saturday, April 21	Tysons Petco

ADOPTION SITES

Alexandria Petco	(703) 660-1300
Burke Petco	(703) 455-2007
Chantilly Petco	(703) 817-9444
Fairfax Petco	(703) 352-3300
Tysons Petco	(703) 448-3401
Animal Medical Center of Springfield	(703) 455-1188
NEW! Potomac Valley Veterinary Hospital	(703) 425-7387

Available for purchase at adoption fairs:
2007 4Paws calendars featuring 4Paws cats and kittens
An assortment of T-shirts with animal friendly messages

VIRTUAL ADOPTION FAIR
www.fourpaws.org/pages/online_fair.html



THE CAT'S MEOW

by SHIRLEY SMITH

Early Sunday morning I woke to the sound of a meowing cat. I went downstairs expecting to find Molly, my 16-year old cat. I did not expect the sounds to be coming from either of my two newest additions—Harry and David.

A few weeks earlier, I adopted two semi-feral brothers that had been rescued fending for themselves in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Neither had ever made a sound. A 4Paws volunteer explained that cats born outside—without much people contact—tend to be quiet (cats learn to vocalize in order to communicate with people, not other cats).

In the basement, I found Molly sleeping peacefully, so I checked on the kittens who were temporarily staying in a large bathroom while I slowly integrate them into the family. Harry seemed fine, but little David was standing in the middle of the Jacuzzi tub in obvious distress. When he saw me, David jumped out of the tub and came straight to me.

David was overjoyed to see me. For the first time, he rubbed against me and affectionately got right in my face. As I was cuddling him, I heard water running in the pipes. Not seeing anything in the bathroom, I put little David down and went to find the source of the running water.

As soon as I closed the bathroom door, David began to meow again—and this, from a kitten who had never before made a sound! I continued to look around the house for the running water, but couldn't find anything. So, I returned to Harry and David in the bathroom.

Again, David was thrilled to see me. I picked him up, continuing to look for the source of the running water. A closer look at the bath tub revealed water trickling from the spigot. One of the kittens must have bumped the faucet handle, turning it on.

After turning off the water and reassuring Harry and David, I left them in the bathroom. This time, David did not meow. That was several weeks ago and he has not made a sound since. I can't help but wonder if the running water triggered memories of his struggle to survive the hurricane.

The boys are safe now and getting pretty comfortable. I'm happy about that—after all, this is their forever home.

MEMORIALS & DEDICATIONS

Michael S.—in honor of Clio.
For Matilda—Bruce M.
In honor of Felicia—Alice K.
Deborah and Thomas H.—for Cordelia.
For Zippy (formerly Jesse)—Jenny Z.
Thank you for Evie—Kristin B.
For Kohl (formerly Tip)—Simone M.

In celebration of Saki, adopted December 2001. He continues to light up our lives every day—Jennifer J.

Smokey is the big love of our lives. He joined us about 5 years ago from 4Paws and is now the center of attention.—Judy Lynn P.

Thank you for bringing Phinneus into our lives.—Judy C.

We love Bruno who gives thanks to you and us daily!—Sandra M.

In memory of:
Harry—Joanne E.
Maya—Kristin M.
Our wonderful Mosby—Dorothy B.
Miel and Gabrielle—Lloyd G.
Grayson—Debra W.

Patrick, you were my little lamb, my heart...I miss you greeting me at the door, your angel face the first thing in the morning, and your warm body next to mine at night. You were taken too soon and we all miss you terribly. Sleep tight nestled in God's arms, my little love, until we meet again. —Marianne C.

In loving memory of Honeyboy who died just before Thanksgiving in 2005. He was so special; I never knew any other animal as sweet as he was.—Vickie Z.

Dr. Lundquist of Singing Stones Animal Wellness Center remembers the following feline clients: "Tigger" Spencer, "Annie" Horton and "Manfred," a 4Paws kitten.


Princess Margot was my lap cat who followed me all over the house. She would greet anyone who came to the house, even the repair man! Her unconditional love and affection were boundless. We love you and miss you, beautiful Margot!—Bridget & Chip Z.

My wonderful cat Alexander (formerly Pretty Boy) whom I adopted from 4Paws in January, 2000 died from a blood clot last summer. I really miss him; I'm so glad I saw his adoption photo at my vet's office. He was a delight for 5 years.—Kathie L.

Samson (formerly Firebird), our well-loved furry friend recently lost his battle with cancer. Adopted from 4Paws three years ago, Sammy was the most laid-back, people-loving kitty we have ever known. He is greatly missed by his mom, dad and furry siblings (especially Binx, another 4Paws adoptee). He has left an indelible mark on our lives and an empty space in our hearts.—Michael & Donna A.

I lost my beloved soulmate, Neville (Stinky) to liver disease this past June at age 13. There is not a day that goes by that I don't miss him.—Denise A.


It has truly been a difficult year. Rest in peace: Boris, the bold dapper tuxedo; Murphy, the soulful sweet black cat; Frederick, the fierce orange Maine Coon; and Bob, the orange tabby, legend of the Fisherman's Wharf.

In memory of Maggie and Marge—although they were born with feline leukemia, they enjoyed life to its fullest and provided a lifetime of great memories during their two year stay with us. We will miss you!—Tom S. 

15 MINUTES OF FAME

Just like Harry and David, your furry loved one can have his or her fifteen minutes of fame. We are looking for funny or heart warming stories about 4Paws adoptees. Please submit stories (500 words or less) to: 4Paws Rescue Team, P.O. Box 2908, Merrifield, VA 22116 or email to info@fourpaws.org.

CASH FOR CRITTERS

Recycle used printer cartridges and earn cash for 4Paws. Postage paid envelopes are available at adoption fairs and participating Petco stores. Or email info@fourpaws.org to request that envelopes be mailed directly to you. 





**P.O. Box 2908
Merrifield, VA 22116**

(703) 715-MEOW
www.fourpaws.org
CFC 7540

Forwarding Service Requested

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Last year, 4Paws volunteers adopted out approximately 400 cats and kittens, many of which would have died in overcrowded shelters or suffered cold, scared and hungry. Since inception in 1995, 4Paws, an all-volunteer organization, has found permanent loving homes for more than 5,500 cats and kittens. Every cat rescued by 4Paws receives wellness vet care; many that come to 4Paws are sick, needing to be nursed back to health before they can be adopted.

The adoption fee 4Paws charges for a sterilized adult does not come close to covering the cost of readying a healthy cat for adoption—let alone the additional expense of caring for a sick feline. Veterinary bills continue to increase each year at an alarming rate, putting a continued strain on 4Paws' financial resources. You can trust that donations to 4Paws will be used as you intend—to benefit homeless cats. With very little overhead—no salaries or rent to pay—91 cents of every dollar goes directly toward helping the cats. More than ever, 4Paws volunteers rely on your generosity to continue our work. Please send your tax-deductible contribution today.

\$25 feeds a litter of kittens for a month \$85 spays or neuters a cat
 \$50 tests one cat for FeLV and FIV \$125 provides vaccines for an entire litter of kittens
 \$175 reads a healthy stray for adoption

YES, I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution in the amount of \$_____ (Please make checks payable to 4Paws and mail to: P.O. Box 2908, Merrifield, VA 22116)

I have moved. Please note my new address below.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

I am interested in volunteering. Please contact me:

NAME _____ TELEPHONE _____ EMAIL _____

4Paws Rescue Team is a 501(c)(3) organization and all contributions are fully tax deductible as allowed by law.

4PAWS WISH LIST

- Foster homes
- Towels
- Cat litter and/or food
- Collapsible "dog" crates
- Cardboard boxes from canned cat food (used for litter boxes at adoption fairs)

4PAWS WEBSITE

www.fourpaws.org

Please visit our website for updated information about adoption fairs, to download an application, or to view some of our many cats available for adoption. Our virtual adoption fair is updated frequently. Completed applications should be faxed to (703) 560-9795.

WORKPLACE GIVING

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)
 Federal government employees designate 4Paws with CFC #7540. **United**
 May participants write in #7540.
Combined Virginia Campaign (CVC)
 Virginia government employees designate 4Paws with CVC #3472.