

4 PAWS PRESS

ISSUE # 21 WINTER 2008

WHY ARE SHELTERS OVERCROWDED?

LAST YEAR*, 66% of all cats entering government run animal shelters in Virginia were euthanized. That is, according to the Virginia Department of Agriculture, of those agencies that reported statistics last year, 36,958 cats and kittens were killed because the shelters didn't have the space or resources to care for these cats.

Government run facilities are required to take in every animal brought to them. So, as more pets are surrendered, strays are taken off the streets, and kittens are born to unneutered cats, those felines who

*2007 is the latest period of compiled statistics from the Virginia Department of Agriculture for city and county-run animal shelters.



Patsy, an animal shelter survivor

have been at the shelter the longest have to go to make room for new arrivals. As a result, many, many healthy, adoptable, loving cats and kittens are put to death to make room for more. Throughout the year, 4Paws rescues hundreds of cats and kittens; we try to take as many as possible from shelters, knowing the odds are against them ever leaving alive.

Why are there so many homeless cats and kittens? This is not just a problem in Virginia, it is a national epidemic. Cats are

very efficient at reproducing. One female cat can give birth to three litters in a single year, each of those litters averaging 4 to 6 kittens (that's 12 to 18 kittens born annually to one female cat). Just six months after birth those kittens are ready and able to reproduce their own offspring at a rate of 12 to 18 kittens annually. At this geometric rate of population growth, in just seven years, the average female cat and her offspring can produce more than 400,000 cats.

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TELL YOUR MOTHER-IN-LAW

TELL YOUR MOTHER-IN-LAW the guest room is TAKEN and that you are saving a feline life. That's it, all it takes is a spare room to save a life by fostering an abandoned cat, a litter of kittens, or an animal shelter survivor. As a foster parent, you provide a temporary home for kittens or cats in need. The length of fostering can vary from a few weeks to several months depending on your availability.

The rewards of being a foster parent are many. They include offering a cat a second chance at life and in return receiving unconditional love and attention from the animal you are nurturing. There is no need to worry about vet costs. 4Paws pays for pre-authorized vet care at one of our participating vets. Before going into foster care, every cat is examined by a vet, vaccinated and tested for feline leukemia and FIV. 4Paws provides for wellness and illness care for the duration of your foster's visit. Your only financial responsibility will be to provide daily care—food, litter, toys, etc. It's your non-monetary gifts that will be most important—love, security, and shelter.

You don't think that your current pets will do well with newcomers? Not a problem, we recommend that you do not introduce your pets to the foster cats—definitely not initially and sometimes not at all for the duration of the foster's stay. The cat will acclimate more

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Checkers and Domino, alive today because a foster home was available.





4PAWS PRESS

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CFC #34517

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. 4Paws supports the management 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
Dede Dixon, vice president
Dianna Hogan, secretary
Linda Simmons, treasurer

Board of Directors

Dede Dixon
Dianna Hogan
Kathleen Kerrins
Barbara Lipson
DeAnna Scott
Linda Simmons

4Paws Online Adoption Fair

is updated regularly, please visit at
www.fourpaws.org/pages/online_fair.html

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

4PAWS HAS CHANGED A LOT since September 1995 when Jasper, the first 4Paws rescue, was discovered huddling under a dumpster trying, without success, to stay dry and warm as a chilly rain fell around him. A volunteer found Jasper, a scrawny kitten, starving and scared yet screaming his lungs out, as she left a restaurant that cold September evening. After a few months of loving care—initial force feedings, a regiment of medications, and lots of cuddling—Jasper was adopted by a family so excited to welcome him into their home that his feet didn't even touch the floor for weeks.

Back then, thirteen years ago, 4Paws was much smaller with only a handful of volunteers and one Petco store adoption site. My first exposure to the organization was to meet a cat rescued by 4Paws while shopping for supplies in a Petco store. A sign on the cage prompted me to make a call and inquire about volunteer opportunities. When I called, what I heard was an outgoing voicemail message saying, "you have reached the 4Paws Rescue Team. We currently have 40 kittens needing foster homes and are desperate. If you can help, please leave a message."



Quite a bit has changed since those early days. We no longer have forty kittens wreaking havoc in the vice president's basement, but still, we are desperate for foster homes. We no longer survive from donation to donation, wondering how we will pay the emergency vet bill for the cat with the broken leg. We are, however, faced with skyrocketing costs—vet services,

food, and supplies. 4Paws doesn't pay any salaries or rent so 92 cents of every dollar donated goes directly toward helping our rescued cats, but still, rising costs are severely limiting the number we are able to help.

That first year, 4Paws received \$2,500 of donations and volunteers found adoptive homes for thirty-two cats and kittens. This past year with donations topping \$50,000, 300 more homeless cats have a warm place to sleep and people to love. In total, 4Paws has rescued more than 6,100 cats and kittens since that cold September evening when Jasper screamed his way into our hearts.

Many things never seem to change, though. Healthy, adoptable cats and kittens die every day in overcrowded animal shelters. People move, leaving their pets behind to fend for themselves—a phenomena occurring with increasing frequency now with home foreclosures on the rise. And homeless cats are procreating at an alarming rate, producing an ever increasing number of cats desperately trying to survive on our streets—not knowing where their next meal will come from or how they will stay warm enough to prevent death from taking them for just one more night.

These are difficult times for everyone; please don't forget the furry ones that depend so much on your generosity for their survival. Make a tax deductible donation today to 4Paws. If you can't donate money, please donate your time. 4Paws is always desperately in need of foster homes. We can only rescue as many cats and kittens as there are foster homes available to care for them. And before you dismiss fostering as an impossibility, please read *Tell Your Mother-in-Law* (see cover page).

Can't donate or volunteer? Then maybe, just maybe you can find room for one more feline friend in your heart. There are so many Jaspers out there, each waiting for it to be his turn to come in from the cold. Adopt a cat and make 2009 that special time for your Jasper.

Happy holidays,



A LABOR OF LOVE

AT 4PAWS WE KNOW that the only way to ever end the out-of-control cat overpopulation problem is through spaying and neutering. That's why every cat six months or older is spayed or neutered before being adopted. And that's why people who adopt kittens too young for surgery are required to provide proof once the kitten is neutered.

We expend great effort educating pet owners on the importance of sterilizing their pets. And 4Paws supports individuals who on their own initiatives develop Trap Neuter Return (TNR) programs and sterilize feral** cats (See *Why are Shelters Overcrowded?*, cover page).

4Paws does not have the volunteer resources to actively participate in TNR programs. We do, however, allocate a portion of our operating budget to pay for vet services provided to feral cats in TNR programs. Often it is individuals who see the problem first-hand and then decide to trap and neuter the cats themselves—selflessly giving their time and money to improve the lives of feral cats. Supporting TNR projects all over the DC Metro area, 4Paws has paid to sterilize and vaccinate thousands of feral cats.

In a perfect world, every cat would have a warm bed to sleep in. But our world is not perfect and we have to do the best we can with limited financial resources and a limited number of available homes. There are not enough homes for all of the friendly, social cats that want to be pets, so for feral cats—those who do not seek out or appreciate human companionship—trapping, neutering, and then returning them to their outside homes is the best we can do for them. Critical to a successful TNR program is having a caretaker who can feed and monitor the health of the feral colony on a daily basis.

Fifteen years ago not many people knew about TNR or even feral cats for that matter. That is when two DC

** A feral cat is one that was either born outside or lived most of its life outside without much, if any, human contact. He is not suited to live inside as a pet. When food and shelter are provided by a caretaker, feral cats can live long, healthy lives.



residents, Susan and Dana, fed up with the endless cycle of birth, suffering, and death in their neighborhood alleys, decided to do something about it. They started what has turned into a well-organized, labor-intensive, volunteer-run feral cat caretaking initiative.

When Susan and Dana start an alley-project they continue trapping until every feral cat has been spayed or neutered. Over the years, hundreds and hundreds of cats have wandered into their traps before being spayed or neutered, vaccinated and then returned to their outdoor homes. Hundreds of cats sterilized translates into tens of thousands of births prevented—cats that would inevitably have suffered short, miserable lives scavenging for a next meal, searching for a safe place to sleep.

After every cat in an alley has been neutered and returned, Dana and Susan try to find a resident in the community who will take responsibility for the welfare of the cats. If no one comes forward, then either Dana or Susan adds the alley to her daily rounds.

Every day, Dana and Susan set out in their respective cars taking food and water to each of their feral colonies. Between the two of them, they visit twenty or more alleys every single day, feeding upwards of a few hundred feral cats—buying the food with their own money.

Caring for feral colonies does not end after food and shelter are provided. Until all the cats have been neutered, there will always be kittens to socialize and place into adoptive homes.

Once all the cats have been fixed and returned and a caretaker starts providing food and shelter, a “managed feral colony” will emerge. Interestingly, managed colonies tend to maintain a

stable size and structure. In general, feral cats do not wander in and out of colonies; they stay put where they feel safe and are being fed.


So when a new cat suddenly shows up in one of her colonies, Susan knows it will turn out to be a dumped pet. Unbelievably, time after time, people see that cats are being fed in a colony and take the opportunity to abandon their unwanted pets to fend for themselves with the ferals.

Every week, Susan encounters newly-arrived friendly cats in her alleys. These recently discarded pets are easy to spot—they don't know how to take care of themselves. They huddle under dumpsters for warmth and security; they often watch but do not approach the other cats when food is provided, and occasionally, not knowing what else to do, an abandoned pet might jump into Susan's car looking for the familiarity and security of human companionship.

The hardest, most gut-wrenching part, Susan says, is when she has to walk away from a poor, frightened, abandoned pet. Of course, she always makes sure that the cat has food and shelter before moving on to the next alley. She knows that she simply cannot take them all with her.

To the extent possible, 4Paws helps Susan find loving adoptive homes for many of these abandoned pets. We are limited, though, by financial constraints and the availability of foster homes. Often there is no other choice but to provide vet services and continue caring for the cat outside until a cat gets adopted, opening a foster space for a new cat.

For fifteen years, Susan and Dana have dedicated themselves to bettering the lives of feral cats—those just out of sight, living in the shadows and sewers. They have improved hundreds of feline lives and prevented countless births (and inevitable deaths).

Tragically, in spite of their efforts, some do die prematurely. A variety of dangers threaten feral and abandoned cats—cars, disease, and rat poison to name a few. Fortunately, though, the vast majority of feral cats benefiting from Susan and Dana's efforts are rewarded with several years of healthy living. 



FELINE TALES WITH HAPPY ENDINGS

Marshall was adopted two years ago to be a companion for a cat named Indy. "Indy doesn't seem lonely any more. He even seems to be more bold since we got Marshall. Indy will come out to greet visitors, which is something he never did in the past. Marshall's definitely been a good influence on him, which is strange because Marshall is a little scaredy cat when it comes to visitors." -Morgan R

Only a couple of weeks old, Hunter (formerly **Larry**) was abandoned by his feline mother, "Hunter loves to snuggle and gives lots of kisses! It has been so wonderful adding him to my family, I love knowing that he is waiting for me to come home while I am at work." -Laurie S



Sebastian (formerly **Timmy**, above) was adopted as a companion to another cat. "In the beginning, Sebastian was very shy. Now he is not even afraid of the vacuum cleaner. After a slow introduction, Rafael and Sebastian are now the best of friends. They are inseparable—they play together, groom each other, and sleep together. They are just two peas in a pod." -Sarah K

Narrowly escaping death, Jessie (formerly **Romeo**) was rescued from a shelter and Joey (formerly **Sgt. Pepper**), was taken from a DC alley as a kitten, "Jessie and Joey are playing together all the time now...this morning, they were laying on either side of a door, playing footsie underneath. My son carries Jessie around everywhere now. And Jessie doesn't mind a bit." -Ann M

Nimitz (formerly **Mack**), one of many kittens found fending for himself in a Manassas neighborhood, "is a real character. He loves water. In the beginning, we had to give him more every few hours as he thought splashing in it was great fun. Still a water baby, Nimitz actually jumps in the shower with me once in a while (not under the water, but onto the bench seat at the end) and every morning he supervises Art's shaving by sitting in the sink while the water is running." -Jennifer J

Five years ago, **Tom** and **Bill** were taken into a 4Paws foster home after their owners had abandoned them outside. "Very soon after Tom died, his brother, Bill, who was always the shy one, developed an amazing new personality! He comes up to be petted and rolls over and over to make sure we don't miss a spot. We can hardly believe he's the same cat!" -Walter and Paula G

Gabriel, abandoned by his family before coming to 4Paws in 2004, "...continues to be the best pet I've ever had and remains as intelligent and affectionate as ever. We are both extremely grateful that 4Paws rescued him from oblivion and unappreciative previous owners." -Bob L

Bianca (formerly **Fuzzy**, below) was rescued from a high-kill shelter. As an adult cat she had very little chance of surviving without 4Paws' intervention. "I spent years contemplating whether to adopt a cat, given the responsibility, costs and challenges of apartment living. But now, I can't imagine my life without seeing Bianca's lovely face every day." -Valerie B



After two surgeries—the result of owner negligence, then abandoned at a shelter, **Marquette** (above) stayed in foster care for a year before finding her perfect home. "Marquette is such a joy. We couldn't touch her the first day, but by day two she warmed right up. She is even doing great interacting with our dog, Lola." -Stacy and Clint W

Willy, a stray kitten rescued in Stafford, was six months old when adopted into a multi-pet household. "We did a slow introduction and Willy has fit in perfectly with our other two cats and small dog. Just the other day, Bebe (dog), Angel (cat), and Willy were all curled up and sleeping peacefully on the bed in their respective corners." -Jane E

Magic was taken out of a shelter just before his time ran out, "Magic is everything I could have asked for... he really does like to be involved with all my day to day activities, including being in the sink playing with the water while I brush my teeth. The cats are at the point where they stretch out on the floor looking at one another, waiting to see who will make the first move to start wrestling and playing." -Barbara P

Adopted as an adult five years ago, "**Tufts** continues to be our best behaved kitty and still gets along best with all three of the other cats." -Sandra H



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, helping them handle the 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 will be discussed in advance with new volunteers.
- ◆ **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.

WANTED: BARN HOMES FOR CITY CATS

FERAL CATS, those born outside or having lived outside most of their lives without much, if any, human contact, are not suited to be adopted into homes as indoor pets. The best that 4Paws can do for these felines is to vaccinate and sterilize them before returning them to their outside homes. More and more often, though, because of construction, busy streets or other dangers, it is not safe to return these cats to their former homes.

Relocating city cats to country barns is a winning solution for all concerned. Your new barn cats will earn their keep by helping to control the rodent population, and you will be saving a feline life or two. Please call 703-715-6369 or email us at info@fourpaws.org for more information.

IS YOUR CAT A STAR?

WE ARE NOW accepting photos for the 2010 calendar. Make sure your cat gets his fifteen minutes of fame—send your photos in before space runs out.

Mail color or black & white photos 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. Include your name and your cat's 4Paws name (if known) with the submission. Sorry, we can't return pictures.

4PAWS GOES TO SCHOOL


WHEN CAROLE MOORE visited a 4Paws foster home to pick up the two kittens she had just adopted, a wonderful relationship started. Ms. Moore listened to all the stories of homeless cats rescued by 4Paws—cats found in abandoned buildings; unbelievable numbers of cats and kittens crammed into a mobile home; stray cats (young and old) eating decaying garbage just to survive another day.

Ms. Moore, a teacher at Forrestville Elementary School, was so moved by

4Paws' rescue work, that she invited volunteers to visit her classroom and talk to the children about responsible pet care. The first-graders, excited to meet our cats, started collecting cat supplies—food, litter, and toys for the rescued cats and kittens in our foster homes.

Every month, September through June from that day forward, Ms. Moore has gone to the families in her school district and asked them to participate in her dream to make this world a little bit better for homeless cats and kittens. And every month, when she delivers those donations to 4Paws, she hears more stories about furry lives saved through the efforts of 4Paws' volunteers.

For ten years now, Ms. Moore has organized monthly donation drives for 4Paws. And each year, in the Spring, Forrestville Elementary has invited a group of 4Paws volunteers along with cats and kittens to talk to the first-graders about caring for pets, responsibly.

From the bottom of our hearts, we want to thank Ms. Moore, her students and their families for the generosity they have shown 4Paws over the past ten years. We also want to wish Ms. Moore the very best as she moves forward toward retirement at the end of this school year. 

ADOPTION FAIR SCHEDULE

Fairfax Petco store from 1 to 5 p.m. on the following days:

Saturday, December 13, 2008	Saturday, April 4, 2009
Saturday, January 10, 2009	Saturday, April 25, 2009
Saturday, January 31, 2009	Saturday, May 16, 2009
Saturday, February 21, 2009	Saturday, June 6, 2009
Saturday, March 14, 2009	Saturday, June 27, 2009

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
Potomac Valley Veterinary Hospital	703/425-7387

Available for purchase at adoption fairs: 2009 4Paws calendars featuring 4Paws cats and kittens and an assortment of T-shirts with animal friendly messages

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



WHY ARE SHELTERS OVERCROWDED?

continued from cover

You may not see the streets teeming with cats, but they are there, just out of sight—living in city alleys, suburban sewers, and vacant lots. And no wonder, with the rate at which cats reproduce, every unneutered pet left outside when an owner moves represents the potential for a population explosion.

4Paws supports Trap Neuter Return (TNR) programs in an effort to put an end to the needless suffering and unnecessary deaths that result from an out-of-control overpopulation problem. Through TNR programs, volunteers trap abandoned, stray, and feral cats that are living outside. These cats are examined by a vet before receiving vaccines and being spayed or neutered.

After recovering from surgery, the feral cats are returned to their outside homes where they are fed by a caretaker each day. Feral cats—those that were born outside, have never lived in a home, or have reverted to their wild natures—learn to survive outside. The outdoors is the only home they know; it is where they are most comfortable. So as long as there are no inherent dangers at a specific location, returning to their outside home is their best option.

Sometimes during TNR, friendly strays or abandoned pets wander into the humane traps. To the very limited extent that foster space is available, friendly cats are taken off the streets and adopted into loving homes. Unfortunately, the reality is that with the never-ending supply of homeless cats out there, our foster homes are almost always full.

As a result, we don't have space to take in the friendly cats and they have to be put back outside after being neutered and vaccinated. And there they wait, out in the cold, fending for themselves until a cat gets adopted and space becomes available in a foster home.



Jessie, an unspayed female taken to a shelter by her owners after giving birth to two kittens.

Day after day, healthy adoptable cats are dying in overcrowded shelters. There are so many more homeless cats than there are available homes. The Humane Society of the United States estimates that for every cat to have a home, each person in America would have to take in 45 cats during his lifetime. The reality is far from the ideal—fewer than one out of ten cats finds a home. As a result, cats and kittens are dying horrible deaths in our shelters and on our streets.

Many of those felines dying in overcrowded animal shelters are born to pets, strays, and feral cats that are not neutered. Help end this tragedy. Make sure all of your pets are spayed and neutered. It's not good enough to simply find homes for your cat's kittens when healthy, adoptable kittens are dying in shelters every day. This is why 4Paws strongly supports Trap Neuter Return programs to stop the cycle of birth, suffering and death taking place every day in our neighborhoods and city streets.



TELL YOUR MOTHER-IN-LAW

continued from cover



easily if he can stay separated from other pets in a room of his own where he can feel safe. It will be less stressful for your own cat, too.

Fostering can be a challenge, but also very rewarding. Foster homes provide cats and kittens with opportunities not otherwise available to them. In your home, with your care and nurturing, your foster cat will have a chance to grow, getting healthier each day both physically and emotionally. With this opportunity that you provide, your foster will be ready to embrace his new home when the right person comes along.

Please consider the possibility of becoming a foster volunteer. It doesn't take much to foster, but the rewards are endless. And remember—FOSTERING saves lives!!



DONATE TO 4PAWS

Online:

Pay by credit card online: www.fourpaws.org
Login and select "send money"
Enter recipient's email address: info@fourpaws.org

By mail:

4Paws Rescue Team
P.O. Box 2908
Merrifield, VA 22116

Payroll deductions and workplace giving:

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC): Federal government employees choose #34517 to designate 4Paws as your charity of choice.

United Way: designate #34517 as your charity of choice.

Combined Virginia Campaign (CVC): Virginia government employees choose 4Paws by designating CVC #3472.



In honor of **Opie**, adopted in 2000 -Pete, Joe & Alex R • **Felicia** adopted July 2003 -Alice K • **Cami** adopted January, 2001 -Kate M • **Lola** adopted July 2005 -Mary and Allan E • **Jasmine** adopted January 2006 -Ade H • **Timmy** adopted after Hurricane Katrina -Millie B • **Valerie** adopted 10 years ago -Harriett D • **Scooter and Skye** adopted in 2005 -Kate D • **Mandy** adopted May 2002 -Nan M • **Barney** rescued after Katrina -Mary B • **Louis** adopted 12 years ago -Ann C • **Matilda** adopted several years ago -Bruce M •

Caesar is about 11 years old now and doing great -John A
We thank you every day for our **Bruno** and what you did to help him, his mother, brothers, and sister. -Sandra and Mac M
Our Mississippi manxes, **Katrina Jupiter** and **Katrina Venus**, aka Emmy and Starr, are thriving. -KC A

In memory of **Anne Jayson**, a long time supporter of 4Paws, her family asked that donations be made to 4Paws in order to honor Ms. Jayson's love for cats.

In loving memory of my 4Paws kitty, **Boo** -Liz L • **Mozart** from Marty, Mel, Beethoven and Morrie • **Miel & Gabi** -Lloyd G • **Casey Cat** -KC A • **Gypsy** -George and Claudia W • **Buttons** -Melinda B • **Tom** adopted with his brother, Bill, in 2003 -Walter and Paula G • Tara Lyn's cat, **Mason**

Angel, you were loved and will be missed terribly.
-Everyone at 4Paws

My **Sammie** died this evening from congestive heart failure... she had a good life -Tim L

Samson (aka **Firebird Montgomery**), we still miss you, Sammy, and always will. -Donna and Mike A

A year of loss for Mike K and Mary C: **Dodger**, you are so loved and missed. We know you are keeping everyone laughing up there. You were the best buddy in the world; **Shadow**, our sweet spunky little girl. We love and miss you so much more than words can say; **Tasha**, you were full of grace. We miss and love our girl so much.

Flower, so handsome you were, a purebred Himalayan. I'm so sorry that we couldn't do more for you. For your sake, I wish your owners had cared for you instead of abandoning you outside when you got sick and old. Rest easy, Sweet Boy.
-Barbara L



Goodbye to our sweet **Plato** (left)—you were the most loving and sweetest kitten. Nothing ever got you down and no illness (even though incurable) was going to dampen your spirit. Even toward the end you were a cuddle bug. You continue to live in our hearts. -Carol, Alex, and Wayne E



Midnight (left) was only in my life for 18 months before suddenly passing, but he gave and received a lot of love during that time. His favorite ritual was to loudly purr and knead his paws around my neck before settling down in the very same spot right next to my pillow. It won't be the same without this special kitty curling up next to me every night. -Deb F

We enjoyed our cat so much. **Odin** unfortunately died in 2007. We continue to appreciate your group for bringing us together. -Sarah D

Pedro—one of fourteen kittens abandoned in a box outside a Petco store. You quickly stood out from the crowd and reluctantly became a loving companion. Though our time together was short, you made a lasting impact and will be missed. -Barbara

Six years ago a cat named **Timmy** (right) came into my life. He was not expected to live but six months. Somehow, some way, we had six wonderful years together. His strength and spirit seemed to heal his body when




there was nothing else that could be done. He leaves a hole in my heart and home, but the memories of his gentle soul and the happiness he brought will last a lifetime. He lived well. To my Timmy—peace, mercy and love be yours in abundance. -Carrie K

Little Baby, the odds were against you from the start—an orphan kitten found in a dumpster at only 2 weeks of age. I will think of you running and playing, which you never got old enough to do in life. -Barbara L

William, my gray, three-legged 'house feral' has died of cancer at age 11. I found him in 1998, a feral cat whose front leg was twisted and infected, and it had to be amputated. So wild William became a house cat! He was conflicted—he often slept on my pillow, but if I got onto the bed, he ran off. I never petted him. But he was happy with me and my cats for 10 years. We will miss his quiet presence. -Susan



Knuckles (left) passed away on 8/18/08 from cancer of the spleen. She lived a short life, 8 years, but received double the love and returned double the love and was truly the princess of the house! She is terribly missed. -Deborah M

Rocco, my sweet girl, you blessed me with your companionship so much longer than anyone expected, yet the end still came too soon. You were so special in your own quirky and stubborn way. Finally you are free from pain and the physical restrictions of old age. Know that you are loved. -Barbara L 





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

**(703) 715-MEOW
www.fourpaws.org
CFC #34517**

Forwarding Service Requested

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

ONCE AGAIN, 4Paws volunteers adopted approximately 300 cats and kittens into permanent loving homes. Without 4Paws, many of those rescued would have died in overcrowded shelters or suffered cold, scared and hungry. Since inception in 1995, 4Paws, an all-volunteer organization, has found adoptive homes for more than 6,100 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 into permanent homes.

The adoption fee of \$95 for a neutered cat 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. The rising cost of veterinary services continues to put a tremendous 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—92 cents of every dollar goes directly toward helping the cats. We rely on your generosity to continue our work. Please make a tax-deductible contribution today.

\$30 feeds a litter of kittens for a month
\$130 provides vaccines for an entire litter of kittens
\$50 tests one cat for FeLV and FIV
\$180 reads a healthy stray for adoption
\$85 spays or neuters a cat

YES, I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution in the amount of \$_____ (Please make checks payable to 4Paws, 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 _____

I am interested in receiving updates about 4Paws via email at _____

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

4PAWS WISH LIST

- More than anything we need foster homes—people who will allow a cat or kittens to reside in a spare room or home office until the feline visitor becomes healthy and confident and finds his forever home.
- Towels
- Cat litter and/or food
- Collapsible "dog" crates
- Cardboard boxes from canned cat food (used for litter boxes at adoption fairs)
- Dog houses to provide shelter for feral cats (the older the better)

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

www.fourpaws.org
CFC #34517

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