

cat tales

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK

High hopes for change at the Stratford-Perth Humane Society

In the summer of 2012, our local shelter, the Perth County Branch of the OSPCA, was merged with the Kitchener-Waterloo Humane Society and became the Stratford-Perth Humane Society, under the direction of the KWHS. It has been an uneasy partnership. On 22 November 2012, twenty-one cats were euthanized at the Stratford shelter while manager Sarah Tickner was absent for a day of training. The incident prompted Tickner to resign and shocked and angered many FFN members, as well as others in the Stratford community.

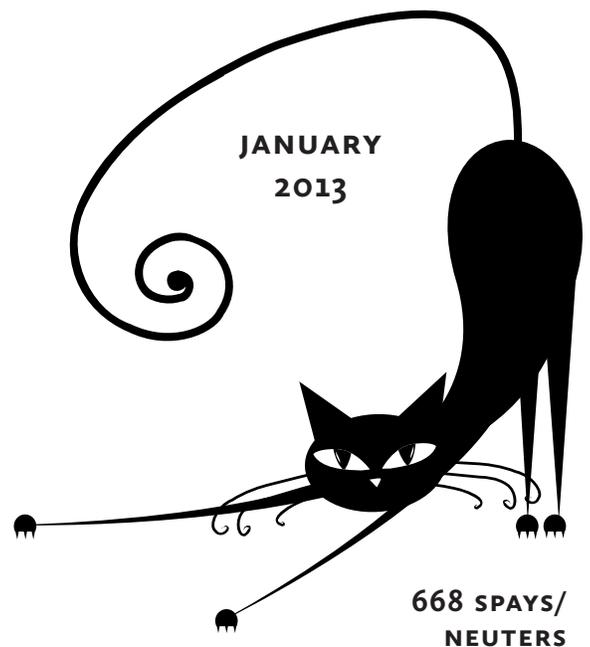
Determined to prevent such an action from ever being taken again, the members of the FFN board of directors and the volunteer Community Council of the Stratford-Perth Humane Society began meeting with representatives of KWHS. They are currently negotiating an agreement which, if reached, will give our local Stratford-Perth Humane Society the opportunity to become one of the most progressive in the province. FFN president Cheryl Simpson is optimistic that good things are on the horizon and will keep FFN members updated as negotiations continue. Stay tuned!

Save the date

The FFN Annual General Meeting will take place on Sunday, 10 February 2013, at 2:30 pm at the Optimist Hall (downstairs) at 72 Water Street, Stratford, Ontario. New members welcome!

Coming soon

FFN will hold another "Upscale Yardsale" on the evening of Thursday, 7 March 2013. Watch for more details in the February issue of *cat tales*.



A home for the holidays



Several years ago, Addy Puss was a stray who showed up at CRP Products, a local Stratford company. She was spayed and vaccinated through FFN's TNR program and became CRP's "shop cat" – coming and going of her own free will. Eventually Addy Puss became so friendly she didn't want to go a'roaming any more and just before Christmas 2012, one of the CRP staff members gave her the special home she'd always wanted. Her new family reports that she loves the Christmas tree and hides in it every day. There really was a Santa for Addy Puss.

furry farewells

CHANGING HEARTS AND MINDS

by Cheryl Simpson

Swipe and his littermates were discovered by FFN in the spring of 2009. Too old to be socialized, they were humanely trapped, neutered, and returned to their outdoor home where FFN caretakers made sure they had shelter and daily care.

While Swipey would never let his feeders touch him, he talked constantly – which is unusual in a feral cat – and would “swipe” at us impatiently when we weren’t fast enough serving breakfast!

Unfortunately, Swipe often took chances crossing the road, and one day last November he didn’t make it. In visiting the nearby businesses to ask if anyone had seen the accident, I was comforted as, one after the other people expressed their sadness at his passing. He was, apparently, a favourite with everyone around as they watched his daily antics. How different from the attitude four years earlier when a staff member of one of those businesses bluntly told me that, as far as he was concerned, “The only good cat is a dead one.” Swipe proved that attitudes can and do change. He was indeed a true “community cat,” loved for the free, untamed spirit he embodied.



IN HONOUR OF ROXY

by Holly Roulston

Roxy was our first little “feral.” She showed up one summer day and sat patiently and gracefully waiting for us to notice her. She clearly needed food and a home. But although we could tell that she really wanted to trust us, she was still wary. Thanks to FFN, Roxy was trapped, neutered, vaccinated, and released where she soon became a fixture in our back yard.

Two winters ago, she went missing for two days. She had been hit by a car and thankfully the driver had stopped and taken her to the vet clinic. When I brought her home, she became ever more trusting – we had saved her once again.

This summer I found a lump on Roxy’s belly. She had a mammary tumour (which are more often than not, cancerous). We had it removed and crossed our fingers. When we released her after surgery, she went right back to sleeping in her spot in the sun under the magnolia tree in the front flower bed.

Too soon, we found that the lump had returned and was growing fast. It metastasized in her lungs and she started to struggle to breathe. On 18 October 2012, I made the decision to help her to not suffer another day.

Roxy was a beautiful little cat who had a hard life (hopefully made a little easier after finding us). She is the reason Floyd and I have become so committed to TNR and I am thankful she gave us the opportunity to know her.



hello kitty!

STEWART MAKES HIMSELF AT HOME

by Laura Evans

Stewart first arrived at my house in the winter of 2011, bedraggled and starved. I started feeding him and borrowed a shelter from FFN, which he lived in through the winter and into the spring.

In April, I trapped him and took him to be neutered and vaccinated. Perhaps all the fuss annoyed him because he disappeared and I thought I'd never see him again. But seven months later, in November 2011, he reappeared. I had a shelter made and Stewart moved right in.

In the summer, my back deck is furnished like an outdoor living room so Stewart was in cat heaven with lovely cushioned chairs to sit in whenever he liked. Eventually, he started to let me pet him.

By August, Stewart had decided that perhaps he'd like to be a "semi-housecat" and started to venture into the house. I have two other cats, Seamus and Miranda, so I wasn't certain how this would play out. But Stewart has been very respectful of old Seamus and since he abides by Seamus's rules, the introduction of a third cat into the household hasn't been as stressful as I feared.

Of course, in many ways, Stewart is still very "feral" – he's nervous of strangers and needs a lot of "outdoor time" – and probably always will be. He sits on my lap and purrs and, like any other cat, he adores warmth, so he loves it when I turn the fireplace on. I just love his personality!

Submit your story

"furry farewells" and "hello kitty!" are new features in *cat tales*. If you have a story you'd like to share with fellow members, please email your 250-word submission (photos are welcome!) to editor Garet Markvoort at ffnnewsletter@gmail.com. Please note that submissions may be edited or held due to space constraints.



A NEW NAME AND A FOREVER HOME

Many FFN members will remember "Amber" (above), who was featured in our November newsletter after being found at an FFN feeding station and taken in by FFN volunteer Louise Allen. Not too long after her star turn on the front page of cat tales, "Amber" found a loving forever home with Christine Smith who has rechristened her "Callie" and shares this update with our readers.

I ran into Cheryl one day and the first thing she said to me was, "There's this cat ..." By the end of the conversation, I knew I wanted to meet her. At first, Callie was cautious and reserved. She didn't run away, but instead considered the situation and waited to see what would happen next. I knew immediately that this would help so much when she met my dog: if Callie didn't run away, Sasha would have nothing to chase.

I introduced Callie and Sasha gradually and when Callie began to explore the apartment, she found her own paths and the windowsills with the best views. She keeps Sasha at a comfortable distance by batting at her without making contact. The two of them are finding their own ways to live together and are definitely making progress. Although I haven't yet found them curled up together, I have found them sleeping in the same room when I've been elsewhere.

Callie is an amazing cat. She knows what she wants – and when and how she wants it. So long as her needs are honoured, she is an easy cat to have in the household.



hello kitty!

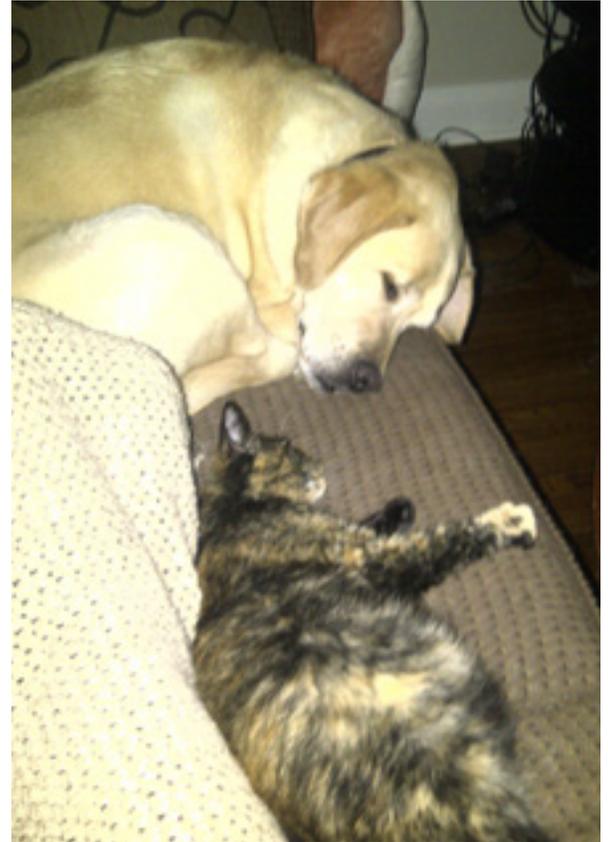
MEW MEW

by Andrea Jennings

I took Mew Mew in as a foster after she was found, hugely pregnant and undernourished, in Sebringville. She's a gorgeous little torti with the clearest green eyes I've ever seen and, as you can tell from the picture at right – taken on her first day at my house – she immediately bonded with my yellow lab, Stanley.

Mew Mew wasn't much more than a kitten herself, so the shelter was unsure how she'd react to being a mother. But she was a pro. I came home from work one day to find that she'd given birth to four kittens and to witness the birth of two more.

She was very attentive and had them cleaned up and feeding in no time. All six of her kittens – four boys and two girls – were just as attractive as their mom. At Sue Pasquale's suggestion, they were named Sue, Emma, Jack (for Julia), Sean, Morgan, and Andrea after myself and my fellow employees at Boomers Gourmet Fries.



In the end, I couldn't keep from falling in love with Mew Mew and decided to make her a permanent part of my family.

She has a very relaxed demeanour and is such a love bug. She and Stanley are the best of friends and she has quickly adopted his desire for treats.

After the kittens were weaned and she had her spay surgery, it took a few days for her to settle back into the house, but now she's acting like a kitten herself!

EDITOR'S NOTE: Mew Mew's kittens were surrendered to the Stratford-Perth Humane Society where all six of them found loving forever homes in time for Christmas. Happy endings for everyone!

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
garet markvoort

