

cat tales

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK

Why foster? Why not!

Cheryl Simpson

I suspect that everyone reading this newsletter likes the individual cat stories we tell. Did you know that each of these stories also involves a foster home?

Our friends at Port Colborne Feline Initiative have come up with a YouTube video listing the top 10 reasons people give for not being able to foster a cat or kitten. You can take a look at it here <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nl9c3G9SicA>

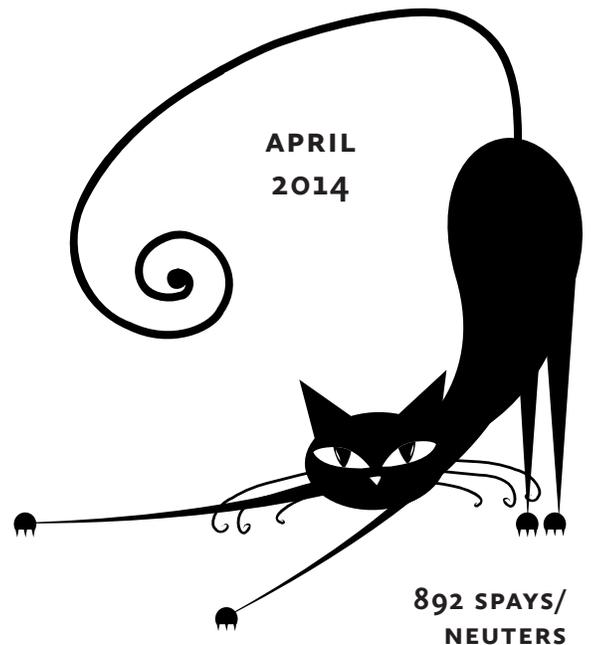
In my experience, of the ten reasons listed in the video, the ones I hear most often are: "I don't have the space/I don't have the time or I'm going on vacation/I have other animals – or a husband who won't let me foster/I might get emotionally attached and not be able to let my foster kitten go!"

Of those four, the last one makes the most sense to me, because letting your "charges" go to someone else is difficult – just as difficult as letting your kids go off to college. There are many of us who have become "failed fosters" because we adopted one or more of the animals we were caring for. But why should that possibility stop you from fostering?

The simple fact is that the reasons FOR fostering, are so much stronger than those against – the most important reason being that by offering a foster home YOU ARE SAVING A LIFE (or often several lives).

We all love cats and want the best for them. Adopting or fostering are the ultimate ways you can help them. Paws of Perth County and other rescues in our area don't have buildings, so they rely completely on foster homes to house the animals in their care. Humane Societies have buildings, but we all know that a 2ft x 2ft cage is stressful for any cat, and when cats are stressed, illness quickly spreads through these facilities.

Fostering situations are a life-line for each and every cat needing to be re-homed. With foster homes we can save more cats. Without them, more cats will die. That is the brutal truth.



We are heading into "Kitten Season" now, and we need many many more people to step forward and offer a space to help a cat. Fostering can be as simple or as complicated as you, the foster family, wants to make it ...

- YOU can choose your time period – from 2 weeks to several months
- YOU can choose the type of cat or kitten you want to foster – from bottle feeders to a friendly stray who just needs to bunk in at a B&B for a while until a home is found.
- WE provide training, food, litter, support and medical care.

As for fostering "rules" ...

- You need a "spare room" – this can be a spare bathroom or even a corner of another room where you can set up a dog crate – for at least the first part of the process. This ensures that your own animals aren't in contact with your foster cat until you and the foster co-ordinator deem it safe.
- To protect everyone, your own cats must be up to date on their vaccines.
- You need to have one to two hours total per day for you or someone else in your

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family to go in and spend time with your foster cat(s) while they are in a “room of their own.”

- And last but definitely not least, you need to have lots of love to give.

Is it work? Yes. Is it emotional? Probably. Is it worthwhile? **ABSOLUTELY.** In fact, fostering just might be one of the most worthwhile things you will ever do. So please, if you are even just a little bit curious about trying this out, email us at info@felinefriends.ca

Oh, and here is one more cat story – the story of how one foster mom began her journey ...

Fostering Lilly

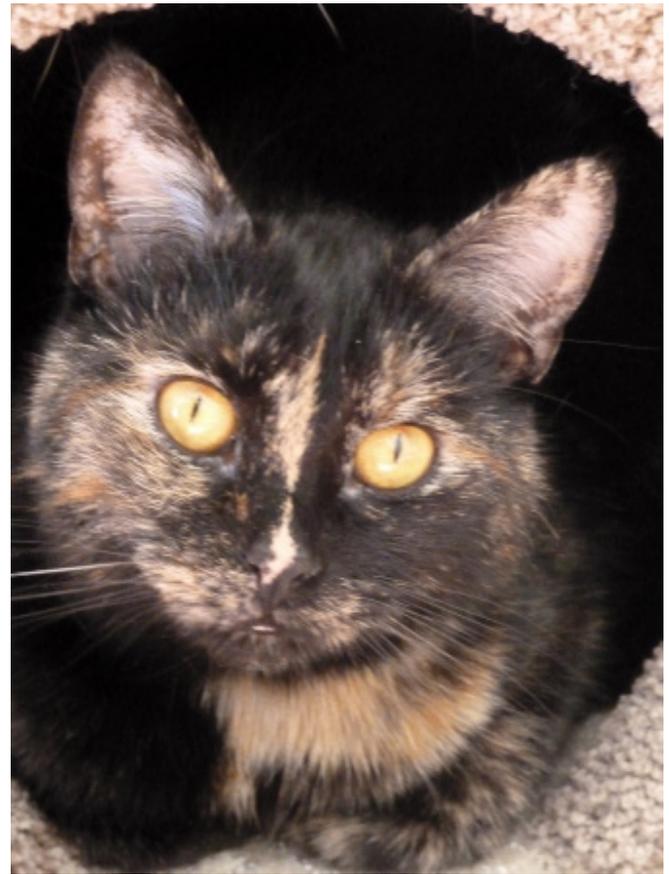
Marg Usprech

I was inspired to start fostering by a cat named Lilly, who had been living as a stray in Exeter, Ontario, for about four months before I encountered her.

She was a very thin, hungry, and frightened girl who needed to be rescued before she got hit crossing a busy highway.

When I first brought Lilly home, she would not eat in front of me but instead covered in the corner of the bathroom. This went on for weeks until she finally got the courage to come up and tap my foot with her paw. As soon as I looked at her, she ran back to her corner. But as the weeks wore on, Lilly became more daring. She eventually wandered downstairs and curled up with the dog. It was still months before we could touch her but she is now the biggest snuggiebug and is with me all the time.

Fostering Lilly made me think about how many cats are deemed feral or unadoptable and subsequently euthanized when all they need is some patience and understanding. It took a long time and a lot of patience for Lilly to overcome her fears, but it was well worth the effort. As I



worked to gain her complete trust, she was the centre of my universe – and I became the centre of hers. There is nothing more satisfying to me than having that special bond.

During the past year, I have had several foster cats, some very sickly and some just needing a place to call home. I have discovered that each one has a unique personality and cats are truly amazing creatures.

Knowing that for every cat you are able to help, there are thousands more that have been abandoned can at times make you feel you are failing – but when little Lilly comes and taps my foot with her paw, I know I have made a difference.

With their qualities of cleanliness, discretion, affection, patience, dignity, and courage, how many of us, I ask you, would be capable of becoming cats?

– Fernand Mery



FFN needs help requesting donations for Wine Raffle

We are asking our members to help us gather donations of bottles of red or white wine for FFN's fifth annual Wine Raffle. This year, FFN plans to approach our local beauty supply professionals – hairdressers/stylists, aestheticians, and massage therapists and others who work in a spa. For fun, we also plan to approach our local animal beauty parlors – we don't want our pet groomers to feel left out!

If you know someone who works in the beauty industry and are willing to ask that person for a donation, please contact Holly Roulston (by email at holly.roulston@f55f.com or by phone at 519.284.2649) to let her know. Please provide your name, the name and profession of the person you plan to contact, and the name and location of the business where that person works (e.g. my hairdresser, Sheila Park, from First Choice on C.H. Meier). This allows us to ensure that the same person is not approached twice. And when you contact Holly, she will give you all the information you need to make your donation request.

FFN hopes to get someone from every salon and spa to commit to donating a bottle of wine and to challenge her colleagues to participate.

If Holly does not hear from you within a few days of the publication of this newsletter, a member of the fundraising committee will be following up on this request with a phone call.

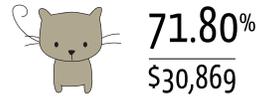
Collected bottles of wine can be dropped off at Paul and Cheryl Simpson's residence at 47 Britannia Street. Or email Holly or Paul (simpson.paul@wightman.ca) to arrange for a pickup.

Everything I know I learned from my cat: When you're hungry, eat. When you're tired, nap in a sunbeam. When you go to the vet's, pee on your owner.

– Gary Smith

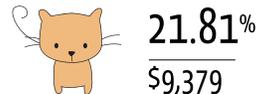
FFN financial data now online

FFN's financial data is now available online! In the interest of being transparent and accountable to our members and donors, we have posted our financial statements dating from 2011 to 2013, and income statement analysis for 2013 on our website. You can find this information at felinefriends.ca/financial.html. Or go to the FFN home page and select "Financial Data" under the "Help Us" menu. FFN is proud of its history of spending its funds prudently and welcomes any questions members may have.



DIRECT BENEFIT TO CATS

trap / neuter / return
low cost spay / neuter
emergency medical needs
adoptions
good samaritan spay / neuter



INDIRECT BENEFIT TO CATS

donations to partner organizations
education
mileage (transport cats to vet etc)
conventions
behaviour hotline



ADMINISTRATION

office
advertising
professional fees
other

Mark your calendar

PAWS OF PERTH COUNTY ADOPTATHON

Saturday, 26 April 2014

10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Global Pet Foods

684 Ontario Street, Stratford

Suggested adoption donation: \$50

(includes spay/neuter, vaccinations, and deflea-ing/de-worming)



Thanks for making the Upscale Yardsale a success!

The silent auction brought applause
Monies going to 'The Cause'
Thanks to Shari, Neil, and Sue –
Your kindness helped the kitties too
Breads and truffles, bisque and quiche
Found their own successful niche
Books went flying off the bed
And now, in homes, are being read
Jewellery found necks and ears
And will be worn for many years.
So thanks to all who gave and came
Far too many here to name
Your generous giving knows no ends
And all to help our Feline Friends!

The upscale yardsale raised nearly \$2000 for Feline Friends with more to come once Holly Roulston sells the leftovers at her spring yardsale in St. Mary's. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

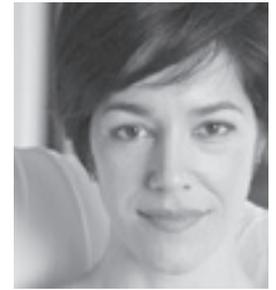
And more THANK YOUs!

To Manulife Financial, who gifted FFN with \$500 through their employee volunteer program "Helping Hands". Cathy Russell, wonderful FFN volunteer and Manulife Financial employee applied to this program and FFN was awarded the grant. Thank you so much Cathy!

To Michelle Kyle of "Purr Healing," a new holistic health practitioner living near Monkton. Michelle is donating 25% of proceeds from her July Reiki Level One & Basic Animal Reiki Training to FFN. And she is offering one space in that class for our silent auction at the Feline Film Festival! Want to learn more? Visit Michelle's website at www.purrhealing.ca

A meow massages the heart.
– Stuart McMillan

Celebrity host for 2nd annual Feline Film Festival



We are very excited to announce a celebrity host for our upcoming Film Festival! Stratford Festival Company member and cat-lover Claire Lautier will welcome you on Friday, June 13, 2014 at Knox Church. Mark your calendars now and tell your friends!

Also, a reminder that there is still time to submit your favourite cat videos or videos that you have created. They can be cute, funny, poignant or unusual, and they must be short (under 3 minutes). Please email links to videos to films@felinefriends.ca no later than April 30. Our judging panel will watch them and select the very best! For more information, see our "Events" page at www.felinefriends.ca.

Lost & found cats

The FFN website now includes a page for lost and found kitties. If you have lost your cat – or found one and are looking for the owner – please email us at lost@felinefriends.ca. It's very helpful if you include at least one photo of the cat, a detailed description of him or her, and where & when the cat was last seen or where the cat was found. Please don't forget to include your contact information!

Our website also has helpful information about how to find a lost cat in the "Reference" section.

We hope that our new Lost & Found page will be a useful tool to reunite lost kitties with the people who love them.

*I have studied many philosophers
and many cats. The wisdom of cats is
infinitely superior.* – Hippolyte Taine

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
garet markvoort

