

cat tales

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK



FelV and FIV – is being diagnosed positive a death sentence?

Cheryl Simpson

FelV stands for “Feline Leukemia Virus” and is a viral infection that affects a cat’s immune system and bone marrow. Because the infection is spread through the saliva, FelV-positive and FelV-negative cats should not live together as there is a risk of the FelV-positive cat infecting the others through mutual grooming and shared food bowls.

Pictured above are FFN member Star Bryans and her three FelV-positive cats: Mister (at left), Flip (in the right background), and Mo-mo (in the right foreground).

Flip, a bit of an anomaly, has repeatedly tested positive for Feline Leukemia – and yet is almost nineteen years old! Mo-Mo (short for “Mowgli”) and Mister (short for “Mister Moustache”) came to live with Star and her family in early fall and early

/continued on page 2

We are so pleased!

That Feline Friends members Marilyn Kicks and Liesel Deppe have answered the call to become foster parents. So many thanks to both of you!

Many more foster homes are still needed . The more we have, the more cats and kittens can be saved. To learn more, please contact us at info@felinefriends.ca or 519-301-5735.

Paws crossed!

So many thanks to Cattail Creek Estate Winery for considering FFN in their “Help Us Help Cats” campaign, where one lucky Ontario cat charity will win the opportunity to receive a portion of the proceeds from the sale of each bottle of the winery’s “Cat Series”. FFN made it to the top three and we were visited by Cattail Creek representative Roselyn Dyck on April 21. At the time of printing the winning charity had not been announced and, of course, we have our paws crossed that it will be FFN. But, no matter which organization wins, we know the cats will benefit, and that’s what it’s all about. Three cheers for Roselyn and Cattail Creek Estate Winery – a business that cares! (Be sure to ask for their wine at your local LCBO)

/continued from page 1

winter, respectively. They were friendly FFN strays who had tested positive for the disease. Knowing that it would be difficult to find foster homes for these boys in households with FeLV-negative cats, Star generously offered Mister and Mo-Mo a permanent foster home.

FIV is short for “Feline Immunodeficiency Virus.” This virus can live in many different tissues in cats and typically causes a weakening of the cat’s immune system.

Many of you will remember “Scruffy Bob” (at left in the photo with his pal Foster on the right) who was released to FFN by the OSPCA two years ago due to his diagnoses of both FIV and entropion. In addition, Scruffy was afraid of just about every human on the planet – but he loved other cats. Unlike FeLV, FIV is only spread through deep bite wounds and is a very slow growing virus. So, FIV-positive cats can live relatively long lives and cohabit with FIV-negative cats as long as there is no significant fighting.

Many vets and shelters continue to recommend euthanasia for all cats who test positive for these diseases, even if they are showing no symptoms. In my opinion this practice is wrong for two reasons:

- 1 There is a very real chance of a false positive test for both FeLV and FIV. All cats testing positive should be retested at a future date, preferably using a different type of test.
- 2 FeLV and FIV cats can and do live perfectly happy lives and they deserve to be allowed to do so, no matter the length of time they are given on this earth.

So why do these cats continue to be routinely euthanized? I suspect the practice has its roots in the ongoing cat overpopulation problem. There are so many cats out there who need homes that expecting animals shelters to try adopt out cats with possible future illnesses is simply unrealistic. In addition, most cat lovers already share their homes with at least one cat, so the risk of bringing in new



cat who might infect the resident animal(s) is real and troubling.

How, then, can we “fix” this, and stop the killing?

In the long run, of course, the answer lies in bringing the cat population down through spay/neuter, so that shelters and rescues will eventually not be inundated with homeless cats and kittens. And, of course, we are all working toward that end. But, in the short term, what to do?

First, we can educate ourselves on both these diseases. Here are a couple of links to help you do that: <http://bestfriends.org/Resources/Pet-Care/General-Pet-Care/Pets-with-Special-Needs/FAQs-About-FIV-and-FeLV-in-Cats/> and <http://www.crashlanding.org/FivAndFelv.html>

Secondly, we can all “spread the good word” that these cats ARE adoptable. While the incidence of both these viruses is relatively low in the healthy cat population (single digit percentages), Star can’t do it all! But she would be the first to tell you how worthwhile it is to look into the eyes of her precious “fur boys” and know she has quite literally saved their lives.

If you think you might like to consider fostering or adopting a “positive” cat, please contact Cheryl Simpson at 519-273-8067 or info@felinefriends.ca. She would be more than happy to answer any questions you might have.



Kashi thanks Adam!

In April, FFN picked up two cheques from our local Global Pet Foods store from their February “Show Us Your Heart” campaign. One of the cheques was from Global headquarters, the other from our local Global store which matched donations dollar for dollar. The final total came to \$2,527.40! This will pay for approximately 25–30 spay or neuter surgeries!!

In addition, Adam, who manages the Global Pet Foods store here in Stratford, has agreed to sponsor FFN’s Feline Film Festival in June and to donate to the event’s silent auction.

Adam and all the staff at Global Pet Foods Stratford have been incredible in their willingness to support those of us representing the four-footed ones who have no voice of their own.

On behalf of all the cats helped, Kashi would like to offer a purring “THANK YOU!”



Global Pet Foods store manager Adam with Kashi – his furriest fan!

Catapawlooza 2014

Catapawlooza will be held this year on Saturday, August 23, once again in the dry and wind-free upper and lower Optimist Halls. We will be reverting to our original format where visitors can expect to be able to adopt on-site the same day, at special reduced prices. Several agencies will be represented. Other popular recurring features include vendors, a barbeque, interesting speakers, displays, and Tabby Tats. And new this year – a mini Cat Café where people can sit and visit with adoptable cats over a cup of coffee!

NEEDED!

The loan of one or more home “espresso machines” for this year’s mini Cat Café at Catapawlooza. If you have one you could loan for the day, please contact us at 519-301-5735 or info@felinefriends.ca

FFN and Paws at the Linc

Come out and visit FFN and Paws of Perth County on Saturday May 10 at the 10th Anniversary of the Linc Family Festival held at the Rotary Complex from 10 am to 3 pm! We are expecting 4,000 people to pass by our table where we will be spreading the word on our need for fosters. We will be rotating cats/kittens (depending who we have in our care at the time) for the duration of the Festival.

We also need volunteers to work a 90-minute shift. Contact Pam 519-949-1695 if you can volunteer. It should be a great day with lots of networking!

Another example of the collaboration of FFN and Paws of Perth County making a difference in the community, one cat at a time.

Royal Canin is offering FFN members the chance to take a free online feline nutrition course. By doing so you will earn rewards points for FFN and Paws of Perth County. For more information contact info@felinefriends.ca.



Cat toys for Canada Day!

What do cat toys and Canada Day have in common? Feline Friends Network!!

FFN's Education and Community Outreach Committee will be setting up a booth for the Canada Day event in downtown Stratford this year. To add a little twist, we are creating a "Guess the number of jelly beans" game – but with cat toys! The winner of the game will receive a prize (yet to be determined) and the cat toys will then be donated to the members of the Animal Welfare Coalition of Perth and Oxford Counties to be provided with the adoptions of cats/kittens.

We are reaching out to the FFN members to donate new small cat toys for use in the game. Donations can be dropped off between now and mid-June on the front porch of 35 Church Street, Stratford (across from the library's back parking lot). Thank you in advance for your donations! This is sure to be a great day of education and fun!

Love cats? Enjoy meeting people on the phone? The FFN Fone Team needs YOU!

We need members to join the frontline team to direct calls to the people who can help.

Volunteers are armed with a binder of information gathered by experienced volunteers that will help you answer any inquiry. The binder also contains the email addresses and phone numbers of FFN members who are on hand to provide expert advice in specific areas.

Please call 519-301-5735 and join us today!

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
garet markvoort



The excitement is building for the Feline Film Festival!

The nominations are in and the judging is about to begin for our second annual Feline Film Festival. Our panel will be watching oodles of short cat videos in order to select the cream of the crop and trim the submissions down to a solid hour of fantastic footage. It's a tough job, but we've got our popcorn and we're up to the task!

It's an easy date to remember – Friday, June 13 – so be sure to put it in your calendar now! Join us at Knox Presbyterian Church in downtown Stratford for this family-friendly event. Doors open at 7 pm with screening from 8–9 pm. Tickets will be available at the door ONLY (\$15 for adults; \$7.50 for children under 13). Admission includes hors d'oeuvres, a beverage (wine and beer available for adults), silent auction, sale of pet-related items, tarot readings, the Best of Stratford Raffle (new this year), and – of course! – many cute, funny, touching, and amazing cat-filled films.

Looking for that pot o' gold

Is your jewellery box a jumble of mismatched gold earrings, gold necklaces with broken clasps, out-of-style gold bracelets, or gold wedding rings that have outlasted the marriage? Donate your broken and unwanted gold baubles to FFN at the Feline Film Festival and we'll turn them into a pot o' gold that will help us help more cats.

