

cat tales

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK



Catapawlooza 2015

WOW! What a day we had for Catapawlooza 2015 ... The rain kindly kept away until the event was over and Optimist Hall was packed with adopters, shoppers, and people wanting to learn more about cats from the speakers. And Larry and Floyd's yummy BBQ fare sold out!

Thanks to our "adoption team" who did an incredible amount of hard work in advance, spending weeks fostering and socializing kittens from trap/neuter/return situations, people were lined up at the doors just waiting to adopt the very special kitties they had seen featured on our Facebook page. A total of 29 cats and kittens from FFN, Paws of Perth County, and the Stratford Perth Humane Society were adopted in just five hours!

And it didn't stop there – 2 more adoptions happened after the doors had closed, and by Monday August 30th, a total of 36 cats and kittens had been adopted because of Catapawlooza!

So, a very big THANK YOU to all who volunteered on the day – without you this event would not have been possible. And, a very special thanks to Marg Usprech, Lynn Pardoe, Holly Roulston, and Brenda Ford who worked tirelessly to have all our fostered animals prepped and ready for the day.

Attention pet owners! Do you know your rights?

by Shawn McLachlan

There is an ongoing epidemic in Ontario that is affecting everyone who owns pets and either rents their home or is a prospective renter of a dwelling such as an apartment, condo, or semi-detached house. Although Section 14 of the Landlord and Tenancies Act of Ontario clearly states that pets are permitted in premises, many landlords knowingly or unknowingly disregard this law by stating that NO PETS are allowed in their rental units. This discrimination against pet owners results in an increase in animal control costs, unnecessary euthanizations, and – most heartbreaking – prospective renters having to give up their beloved pets.

As a renter and pet owner of two beautiful cats who are also my best friends, I have discovered firsthand just how difficult it can be to find a landlord who accepts pets. Over 80% of the rental ads on Kijiji – one of the largest and most popular sites for finding rental accommodation – state NO PETS. And Kijiji encourages this discrimination by offering “Pet Friendly” as an option when posting properties.

When looking for a home for myself, I attended several open houses and viewings where landlords insisted that pets were not permitted. At one of these, I overheard a young family trying to figure out what to do with their pets as they desperately needed a home and might otherwise be homeless. All I could think was “what a horrible decision to have to make.”

Disturbed by my own experiences and the thought of animals losing their homes and/or being euthanized, I began to research the issue. Unfortunately, I discovered that even though the law states that landlords cannot forbid pets, the problem is far too common.

A friend of mine who was unaware of the law once gave up her dog and three cats to get a home because otherwise she, her husband, and

their three children might have been reduced to living in their car. Learning of the law after the fact really hurt and has devastated the family still years later.

I’ve also heard of an elderly couple who, afraid of losing their home, euthanized their 3-year-old pug after their landlord said the dog was not welcome.

And the Stratford Humane Society told me that they regularly receive calls from pet owners and have pets surrendered by tenants, and prospective tenants whose landlords will no longer rent to them if they have pets or won’t allow pets in the rental dwelling.

The problem is so widespread that the Toronto Humane Society is overloaded with pets as a result of the disregard of Section 14 of the Landlord and Tenancies Act and has drafted a page-long letter addressing tenants’ rights.

I consulted a legal source about Section 14, who confirmed that any term in a lease or tenancy agreement that says you can’t have pets is “void” – meaning that a “NO PETS” clause or term cannot be enforced by a landlord. If you are a tenant and you have a pet and your pet is not doing anything to substantially interfere with the reasonable enjoyment of the premises by other tenants or the landlord, you CANNOT be forced to remove your pet.

I understand that many landlords are concerned that their rental properties will be damaged by pets. But pets do not cause damage to a home, bad tenants do! Responsible pet owners have well maintained pets, clean up after their pets, and repair or notify the landlord of any damage they have caused. Pets should not be used as excuse to disobey the law or to discriminate against people.

My hope is that we can work together to educate people about Section 14 and to prevent the lives of more pets and pet owners from being destroyed.

Remember – Pets are welcome. It’s the law!

*I love cats because I enjoy my home;
and little by little, they become its
visible soul. – Jean Cocteau*

*There’s no need for a piece of sculpture
in a home that has a cat.*

– Wesley Bates



All the time in the world

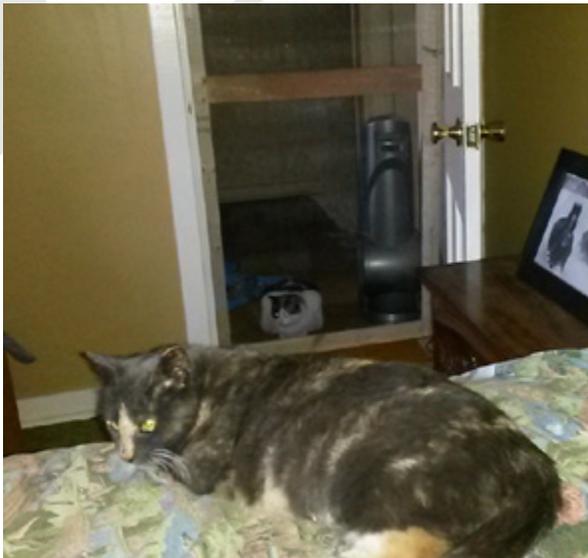
by Cindy Fickling

One day, a picture on FFN's Facebook page caught my eye – and then the story of a little female cat named Amelia broke my heart.

Amelia was a throwaway, left to fend for herself. The Facebook post said that a very caring lady had been making sure Amelia was fed and then managed to catch her and take her to be spayed so that she wouldn't have to worry about looking after babies for the rest of her life. Unfortunately, Amelia had nowhere to go except back outdoors to fend for herself again.

Reading about this little girl, I knew that, given some time, she could be very happy living a life of luxury. We decided to bring her home for a trial foster-to-adopt period.

We renamed her Lilly and put her in a room of her own for the first couple of days. But I knew it wouldn't be fair to keep her behind a door for too long so we installed a screen door to the room that let her see out and meet the household when she wanted while still feeling safe. It was the perfect set-up.



After Lilly began spending more time at the screen with our resident kitty and seemed to feel comfortable, we let her out into the house.



At first, I wasn't certain that it would work. There were some minor battles and Lilly refused to come downstairs unless I brought her. Even then she was tense and unsure. But I would sit with her on the couch and pet her and each day she stayed a little longer. One day, she seemed to realize that TV time was great – lots of cuddles and belly rubs. And after about 5 to 6 weeks, she decided she owned the place!

Lilly now ventures all over the house, although she is still a bit leery of our dogs. They're curious about her but she doesn't yet understand that they want to be friends. Still, every day, she lets them get a little bit closer and I know that eventually they will be total buddies. Lilly just needs to do things at her own pace. Which is totally fine with us. She's is going to be a member of our family for the rest of her life and she'll never be a throwaway again. I feel very honoured she has trusted us enough to call this her home.

Cats according to Mark Twain ...

If animals could speak the dog would be a blundering outspoken fellow, but the cat would have the rare grace of never saying a word too much.

If man could be crossed with the cat it would improve man, but it would deteriorate the cat.



Get 'em while they last!

Tickets for FFN's 6th annual Wine Raffle are selling fast! Based on increased prize values this year, we were able to print 2,350 tickets (up from 2,150 in previous years). All the tickets have been distributed to members and retail outlets.

If any members have unsold tickets they can't sell, email Holly Roulston at holly@felinefriends.ca and she will make arrangements to pick them up so that we can redistribute them.

Fully sold books of tickets should be returned by Friday, October 9th. Email Holly to have them picked up or drop them off to Paul Simpson (simpson.paul@wightman.ca) between September 19th and October 9th.

Thank you to everyone who has offered to sell tickets. The wine raffle fundraiser would not be the success it is without all of you!!

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU

Our heartfelt thanks to Tish Smitjes and her husband Derek Baker who decided they didn't want presents for their 10th wedding anniversary party, but instead wanted to support FFN. They put together a raffle and had all their guests take part, raising \$735 for FFN which Tish and Derek then topped up to \$800! With supporters like these, how can we go wrong? Happy anniversary Tish and Derek – you rock!

Thanks also to both Pet Valu stores in Stratford (Huron and Ontario Street locations) and their customers who donated canned cat food to help feed the feral colonies this fall!

Paws of Perth County Adoptathon

Saturday, September 26 | 10 am to 3 pm
Global Pet Foods (684 Ontario Street)

For further info, contact Paws of Perth County
519.949.1695 | 519.272.0848 |
pawsofperthcounty@gmail.com

CATAPAW KITTENS IN THEIR NEW HOMES

