

cat tales

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK



How to have Hope

by Lynn Pardoe

Last August I got a call to do my first TNR (Trap/Neuter/Return). Amazingly, it was at a neighbour's home where a black cat with two kittens at weaning age were living under her shed.

Nancy had started feeding the cats regularly. When I came over to review the situation, I discovered that the mama cat was in great shape, although she had obviously suffered from some years outside – she only had half a tail and her ears had been frostbitten. Most surprisingly, she didn't act like a traditional feral. She didn't run off. In fact, she let strangers approach to within a few feet. And, she certainly understood – and appreciated! – being fed.

I set up to trap the following Saturday. I was successful in getting the two kittens, then the mom. She was a bit wild, but I managed to transfer her to the carrier where the kittens were waiting. I carried her home to her new temporary quarters: my spare room closet.

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A SPECIAL "THANK YOU"

A hearty year-end shout out to our incredible Stratford Pet Stores – Pet Valu, Global, and Feed-All. Not only are they always there to provide food when supplies run low, but time and again they choose FFN to partner with during fundraising campaigns, raising much needed funds for both spay/neuter surgery and medical care for foster cats. We cannot thank you enough!

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EXPENSE REPORT FOR REIMBURSEMENT/ TAX RECEIPT

Just a reminder to our colony feeders/members who have saved receipts for cat food/related expenses. If you would like a donation tax receipt, the itemized expense report and original receipts are due 15 January 2017.

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HEAD'S UP!

FFN's Annual General Meeting will be held on Sunday, 26 February 2017 at 2:00 pm at the Optimist Hall (downstairs), 72 Water Street, Stratford. More information and the full AGM package will be available in late January for all members.

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When the kittens left her for adoption the next day, it was just Hope – the name she has ended up with – and me. While she was clearly scared, she didn't act totally feral. This posed a dilemma – should I keep her and try to tame her or release her once she'd been spayed and vaccinated?

This is always a difficult decision for those involved. Creating a colony of one cat requires a potentially decade-long commitment from the home owner, which is asking a lot of anyone. And in Hope's case, she would once more be out in the elements without a tail and ears to help her stay warm.

The flip side? I already have five cats and I wasn't convinced I could successfully introduce another. And most importantly – was she truly feral or not? Ultimately, FFN's goal is to do what is best for the cat and this was far from clear.

However, I have learned that where we dare, we can succeed.

I had Hope for four weeks with only very marginal improvements in her ability to trust me. I was worried as I was going away for three weeks, but through FFN, Louise Allen stepped up and offered to help out while I was away.

This proved to be the key to unlocking Hope's trust. She took to Louise and started to fit with Louise's three older cats. Louise is keeping her.

This is a great success for all – Hope in particular, but also for Nancy and me. I now recognize that going with your gut on these situations *can* work out.

Most beds sleep up to six cats. Ten cats without the owner. – Stephen Baker

A cat allows you to sleep on the bed. On the edge.
– Jenny de Vries



A FEW WORDS FROM LOUISE

It has been amazing to watch as Hope has transformed over the past two months from a cat who hid in her carrier and hissed at me to a cat who follows me up and down the stairs all day, leans against my legs while I wash the dishes, and has even started to head butt me when I watch TV.

We still have a long way to go but I see improvements each day as both Hope and I learn to trust each other a little more. I credit Christopher, one of my older cats, with being a role model for Hope. She watched him interact with me with curiosity and disbelief and eventually began to mirror Chris' behaviour.

I know there has been pain and hardship in Hope's past; losing her ears and possibly her tail to frost bite must have been incredibly painful. But, she has settled into life indoors very well and has seemingly endless energy and desire to play. For obvious reasons, I named her Hope.

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DON'T MISS OUT!

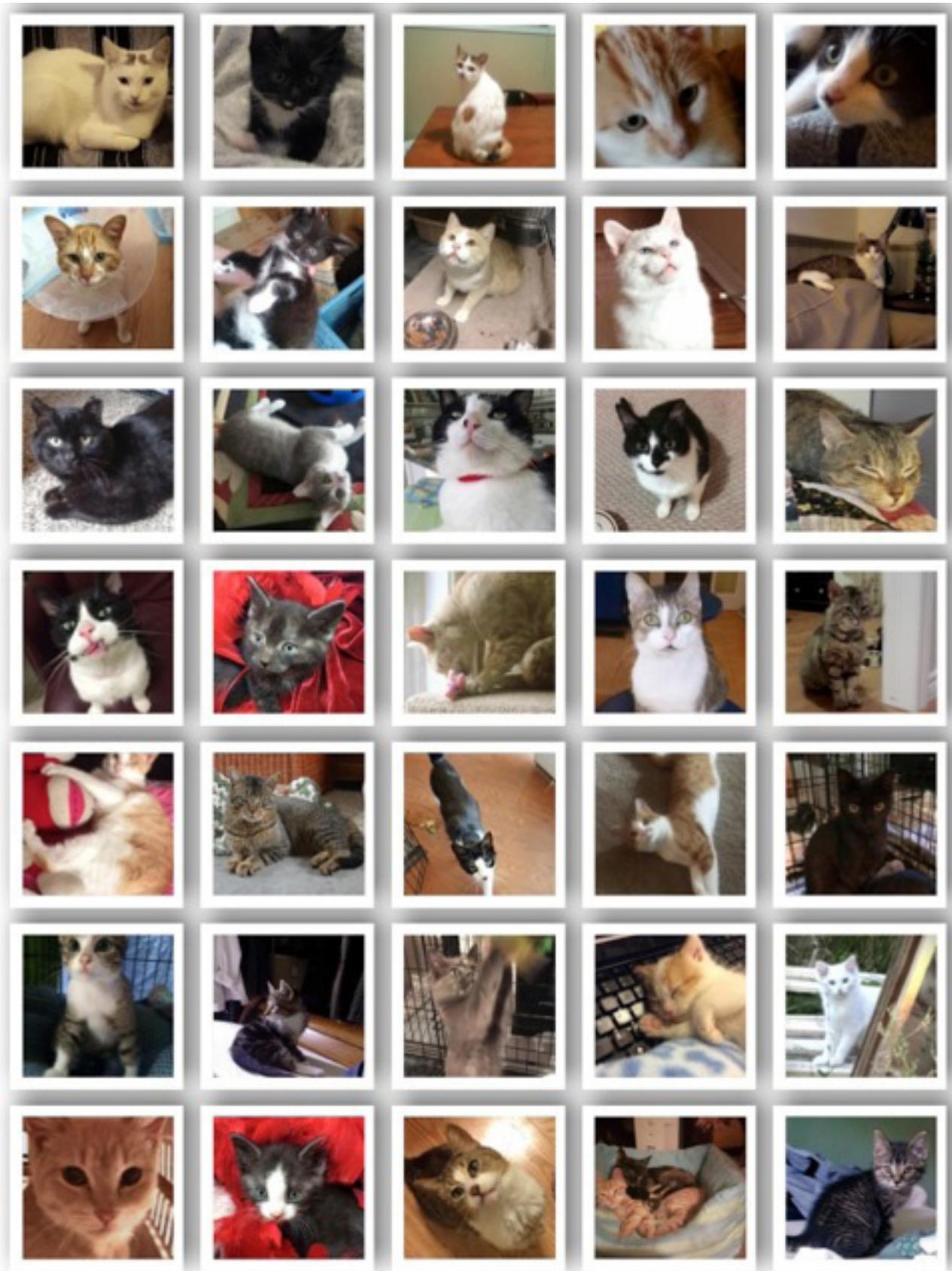
Puddy Products will be at the Stratford market on Saturday, December 10th and 17th with cat toys, kiddie toys, hats, mitts, scarves, slippers ... the list goes on.

And ALL THE MONEY RAISED GOES TO FUND OUR FFN PROGRAMS!!

Make this Christmas special for a cat or cat lover by dropping by to buy.



Thanks to the programs offered by FFN, a total of 72 cats are no longer living outdoors. Here are just a few of the happy felines who found fur-ever homes in 2016.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As 2016 draws to a close, Feline Friends Network completes nine years of activities, with our mandate of spay/neuter return remaining our primary focus.

We are fortunate to have members who support us however they can and dedicated volunteers who help with cat/kitten trapping, transportation to/from vet surgeries, fundraising, outreach, fostering, managing programs, and other activities.

Community organizations such as FFN cannot exist without committed members and volunteers. With a present membership of 174, we can be proud that we continue to go from strength to strength. I thank the Board of Directors and Committee Chairs for their commitment to helping that cats and kittens throughout Perth County this year, and not least the regular members who keep us going, many of whom donate to the organization. I wish you all a peaceful and enjoyable festive season as we look forward to continuing to assist our feline friends in 2017.

Best wishes, Doug Fyfe, President, FFN

MESSAGE FROM THE PAST PRESIDENT

Let me express a huge “thank you” to all FFN supporters – members, donors, pet stores, veterinary clinics – without whom we couldn’t do what we do. And, an extra-special THANK YOU to our volunteers. We at FFN are so proud that we are a 100% volunteer organization, which means all the money raised goes to help the cats. It also means that everyone working here – and sometimes it is very hard work indeed – is doing so because they love and want to help the animals. Volunteers are the backbone of FFN – we salute each and every one of you !

Cheryl Simpson, Past President, FFN

Giving Tuesday 2016 a big success for FFN

Thanks to the generosity of our donors and matching partners, FFN raised \$3,058 on Giving Tuesday 2016!

A heartfelt thank you to Mike Vancea of Vancea Financial and Trudie Wiseman from CR Plastic Products for each matching \$500 in donations. We’d also like to thank the anonymous donor who matched the last \$200 in donations.

For those donors who plan to take advantage of the free or discount offers from the businesses that supported FFN this year through the online campaign, please remember that the offers are good for the month of December ONLY and you must show proof of your donation by presenting your voucher or Canada Helps donation tax receipt.

We’re pleased to announce the winners of our draw from among donors who gave \$50 or more:

- Patricia Burnell received the free haircut with Taylor from the Spa Near the Tracks
- Barbara Beckett won the box of chocolates from Chocolate Barrs Candies
- And the free batch of wine from Bell’s Winery goes to Denise Renaud-Bunda

A cat can maintain a position of curled up somnolence on your knee until you are nearly upright. To the last minute she hopes your conscience will get the better of you and you will settle down again. – Pam Brown

Most cats do not approach humans recklessly. The possibility of concealed weapons, clods or sticks, tend to make them reserved. Homeless cats in particular – with some justification, unfortunately – consider humans their natural enemies. Much ceremony must be observed, and a number of diplomatic feelers put out, before establishing a state of truce.

– Lloyd Alexander

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
garet markvoort

