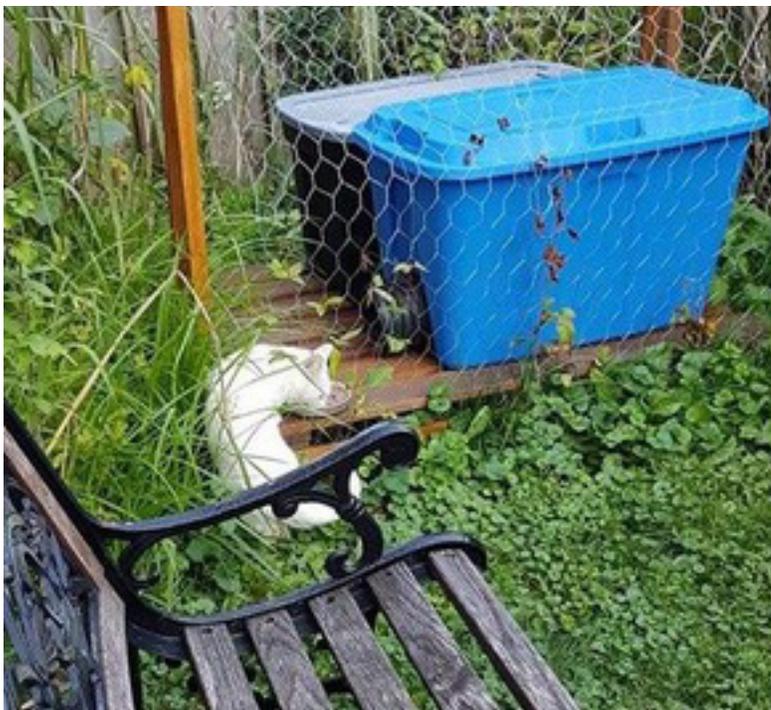


cat tales

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK



A frightened Ghost

by Shauna King

In the summer of 2016, a white kitten was spotted in the Devon Street/golf course area. FFN was notified and several people tried to catch or befriend him without any luck. Because he was coming to our house on Romeo Street fairly regularly to eat the cat food Tylor and I put out for our indoor/outdoor cat, FFN recruited us to set a live trap. In September 2016, he was successfully trapped and neutered.

FFN planned to keep "Ghost" indoors, hoping that he was young/tame enough to be adopted, but he refused to eat and had to be released back on Romeo Street after a few days, where we took on the task of feeding him daily. For the first six months, although food disappeared, we never caught sight

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Animal welfare bylaws in Stratford: Don't shop, adopt!

by Sharon Morrice

Stratford may soon join Waterloo, Cambridge, Toronto, and thirteen other Canadian cities with bylaws that ensure pet stores source cats and dogs responsibly and do not contribute to the problem of pet overpopulation in our community.

On 26 March, the Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Committee voted to recommend to Council that all cats and dogs available for adoption in Stratford pet stores must come from reputable shelters or rescues and be spayed or neutered before adoption. To read an article about the meeting, please visit <http://www.stratfordbeaconherald.com/2018/03/27/committee-supports-limits-to-pet-sales>.

Since 2015, Feline Friends has been asking City Council to pass a progressive animal welfare bylaw to end the retail sales of unspayed and un-neutered cats and dogs in Stratford pet stores. Our volunteers see the consequences of feline overpopulation and homelessness daily – abandoned cats and their offspring who lack the food, shelter, and

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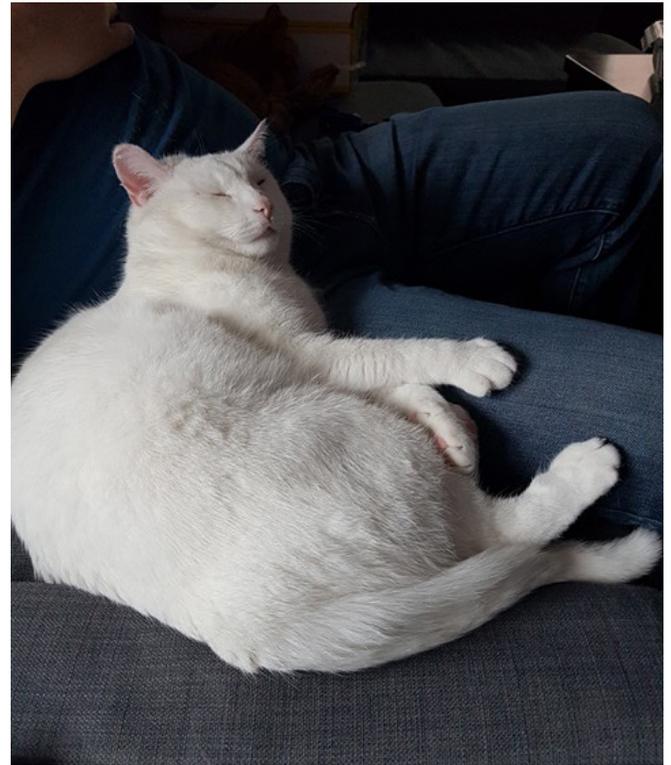
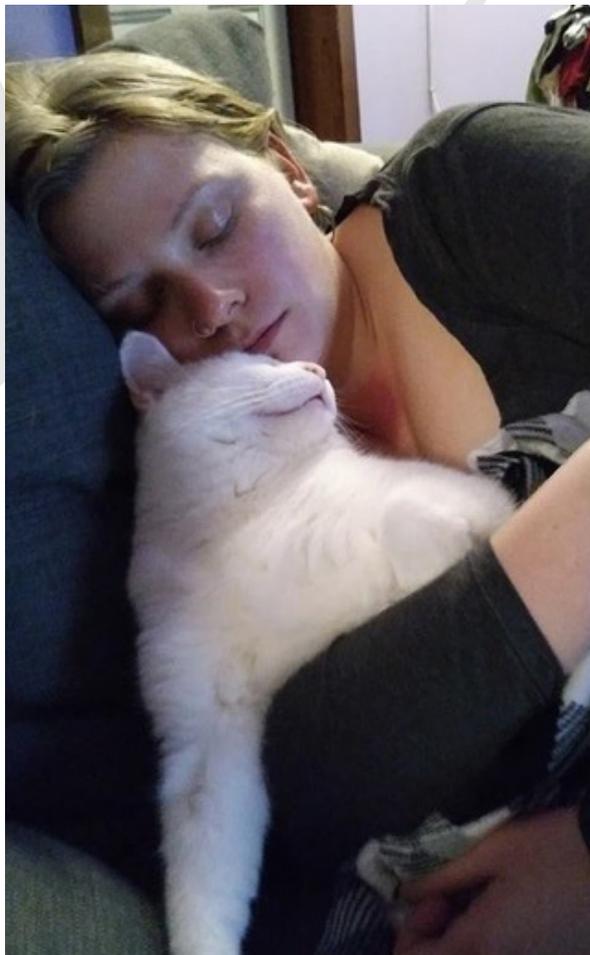
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of him. But when FFN set up a motion camera to discover who was eating the cat food ... sure enough it was Ghost!

Ghost slowly started letting us see him – from a distance. Then he began to wait at his feeding station for dinner, although when he saw us coming he would hide in the neighbour’s yard until we were gone. And finally, he started to come when called and even began to venture onto the deck. But we still couldn’t get near him.

Then, one day, I was tossing treats to Ghost, hoping to entice him into eating one out of my hand. When he got close enough to take the treat, he astonished me by shoving his face right into my hand!

That must have been Ghost’s “Ah ha!” moment, because from then on he LOVED to receive pets and attention from us. It was like



the flick of a switch. He spent all his time in our back yard and on the back deck sleeping. He cried for us at the door. He just couldn’t get enough attention!

Fast-forward to last October and the first snow storm of the year. I was outside looking for Ghost, hoping to convince him to use the heated shelter we had borrowed from FFN. He was nowhere to be seen and, feeling distraught, I went inside to watch for him. Within minutes, he came running up to the door and when I opened it, he ran right inside!

From that moment on, Ghost has been an inside cat and shows no desire to go back outside. It took two months, but he is all settled in and getting along great with our four other cats! Tylor and I weren’t planning to adopt another cat, but Ghost has come so far and he trusts us. We’ve decided to be his forever, loving home!

Cats do care. For example they know instinctively what time we have to be at work in the morning and they wake us up twenty minutes before the alarm goes off.

– Michael Nelson



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medical treatment to prevent needless illness, injury, and suffering.

Fortunately, most pet stores in Stratford do not sell pets from undisclosed sources. Instead, they partner with Feline Friends and/or Stratford-Perth Humane Society to feature only sterilized shelter and rescue animals in their stores, helping get them adopted. We want all pet stores to follow that model in future.

Thanks to last Monday's decision, we are one step closer to that goal. But in order to make this bylaw a reality, City Council must still vote in favour of it. Please contact Council members to let them know that you are in favour of pet sale regulation! Email addresses and phone numbers can be found on the City's website at <https://www.stratfordcanada.ca/en/insidecityhall/citycouncilcontact.asp>. To send a single email to all members of Council, use the link at the bottom of that page.

FFN MEMBER DISCOUNT NOTICE

Please note that, due to circumstances beyond our control, the FFN member discount at Pet Valu Stratford may no longer be available. We will send out a special message to our membership once we have final clarification.

We'd like to stress that member discounts are provided as a courtesy and may change at the discretion of the business owner and that Pet Valu Stratford is still a major supporter of FFN.

We are fortunate to have been chosen once again as their charity of the month for April, with fundraisers running each weekend, including a bake sale on 21 April and a yard sale on 28 April.

Pet Valu also continues to partner with FFN for in-store kitten adoptions. We appreciate Pet Valu's ongoing support and we hope our members will continue to support them.

A cat can purr its way out of anything.

– Donna McCrohan



Owner Derek Barr shows off Grandpa Bunny

A whole lot of bunny money!

Feline Friends Network was the lucky recipient of this year's Chocolate Barr's Candies 'Grandpa Bunny' draw! Every Easter, owners Derek & Jacqueline Barr and staff create a giant (17 pounds!) chocolate bunny, and hold a draw at their George St. store to raise money for charity. It's one of the busiest times of year at the shop, and many of the customers would like to be the one to take Grandpa Bunny home.

This year, the winner was Lori McCabe of Stratford. We would like to thank Chocolate Barr's Candies for generously donating the draw proceeds of \$720 to FFN to help us help more cats!

The trouble with sharing one's bed with cats is that they'd rather sleep on you than beside you.

– Pam Brown



A setback and a solution

by Holly Roulston

Those of you who attended the FFN Annual General Meeting will have heard me announce that, in view of the cancellation of the Shoppers' Optimum charity cards, I had offered to sign up under my name and using my FFN email address for an individual PC Optimum Points card. Shoppers' Optimum had confirmed that points could still be transferred between individual cards and the plan was to use the new card exclusively for FFN.

While I did set up a new card, I hit a roadblock when I logged into my personal card account and tried to transfer some of my own individual points to the new "FFN card." I could not see anywhere that this was still an option.

When I again messaged the company, I was told that – contrary to their previous response – points can no longer be transferred between individual cards. Which means, unfortunately, that a PC Optimum Points card is not an option for FFN as a charity.

I would ask that anyone who has signed up for the new card and has points to donate to instead do some shopping with FFN in mind. Pick up a bag of cat food, a carton of soft food, some Whiskas cat milk or other supplies for our colony cats and rescued kittens. Or grab a paperback or home decor or sports-related item to donate to our next silent or online auction.

To arrange for pick up of the items, contact holly@felinefriends.ca or call 519.284.2649.

I would also like to say a big THANK YOU to everyone who donated points over the years.

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REMEMBERING LAVERNE WEITZEL

Our heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends of the late Laverne Weitzel, who faithfully volunteered at one of FFN's feral colonies for several years. Thank you for your kindness, Laverne, the cats will miss you.



FROM UNLOVED TO LOVED

Samson is one of those special cats who need time and patience to feel safe again. While we're unsure of his history, he came into our care in pretty rough shape. Since then he has done remarkably well in his foster homes and Kim, our cat specialist, is thrilled to report that he is playing, enjoying rubdowns, and has purred for the first time. Stay tuned for more updates on Samson!

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A DAY TO SPAY

World Spay Day is an international day of action to promote the sterilization of pets, community cats, and street dogs as a way to save animals' lives.

FFN greatly appreciates the local veterinary clinics who participated in World Spay Day, 27 February 2018, by offering discounts on their spay and neuter fees from one day up to one week! The seven clinics who took part this year were Avon Pet Hospital, Coventry Animal Hospital, Kirkton Veterinary Clinic, Mitchell Veterinary Clinic, Perth Veterinary Services, Romeo Pet Hospital and St. Marys Veterinary Clinic.

Also, a big thank-you to new FFN volunteer, Amanda Dobson, who took on the task of organizing and promoting this year's event!

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
garet markvoort

