

cat tales

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK

Cold enough for ya?

By Pat Burnell



Digging out the feral colonies gives one an appreciation of the need to offer these cats shelter from the cold and snow.

But because so many of you have stepped up to help a feral cat or two weather winter's storms, the number of shelters built and sold by FFN was dwindling faster than the snow was falling. Calls were coming from all over with requests for the containers that Larry Baswick and Charles Riley construct in our garage and we had none to give.

So ... even though the Christmas holidays were upon us, the shelter crew of two shopped for materials, made preparations, and got busy over a number of VERY cold days to 'build' 13 new homes for wayward wanderers. The calls continued to come in, the shelters to fly out the doors, and the snow to keep falling. Kudos to Charles and Larry and all the cat caretakers.

If you have a shelter that is not being occupied, please return it to FFN so it can be re-used.



Update! Feline Friends Network Annual General Meeting

The FFN Annual General Meeting will be held on **SUNDAY, 25 FEBRUARY, 2018** at 2 PM.

The meeting location is new – the **RITSMa MEETING ROOM** in the **BURNSIDE AGRIPLEX BUILDING**, located **BEHIND** the **ROTARY COMPLEX** on McCarthy Road in Stratford.

Links to the meeting agenda, the minutes from the 2017 AGM, and FFN's 2017 financial statements were sent in an email this past Tuesday (30 January). If you need to refer to them, please print and bring them to the AGM.

To get to the meeting, park in front of the Burnside Agriplex Building and enter by the front door. The stairs will be straight ahead. Go up two flights and then through the door and down the hallway to the Ritsma Meeting Room.

Or, if you prefer, you can take the elevator, located next to the stairs, up to the second floor. There will also be direction signs on-site.

Remember to bring a bit of cash for FFN dues renewal, the "penny raffle", Puddy Products, and a new version of the FFN T-shirt.

If you cannot attend the AGM and would like to vote by proxy, please contact Paul Simpson at 519-273-8067 to make arrangements.

Olive, our little teacher!

by the FFN Foster/Adoption Team

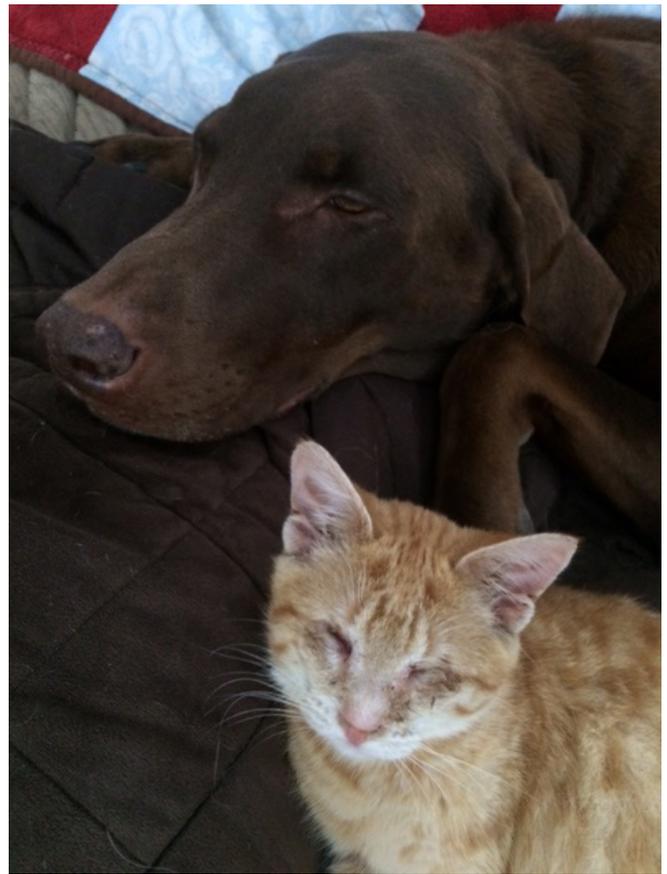
The text message came on December 27th. A cat had been found who had no eyes. My first thought, “WHAT?!” My second thought, “Thank goodness they know that FFN will help this cat.” I immediately began to worry about all the “what if’s” ... hoping that perhaps the finders were wrong and she had at least one eye, feverishly researching blind cats on the internet and at the blind cat sanctuary web site.

When we met little Olive, some of our fears were put to rest. She was a lovely, friendly, happily purring little girl who appeared to have adjusted to the world as she knows it. The vet, Dr. Cassandra, was also very encouraging and we all agreed that she will be a wonderful companion for someone.

But first, we needed to get her over the hump of an upper respiratory infection ... CHECK! But then she stopped eating – possibly because the antibiotics may have thrown her little system off – and it was back to the vet for a check up and some fluids (in our experience, subcutaneous fluids can really help a cat or kitten feel better quickly). The next day Olive was more herself and back to eating again!



Olive at the time she was brought into foster care



A recent photo of Olive relaxing with her canine pal, Amy

One of the things we were most concerned about was whether Olive would be able to learn to find and use her litter box, but she located her box quickly and hasn't had any issues since.

Olive likes the company of dogs and other cats and has no issues with going up a flight of stairs. Coming down them, however, was a different story. In the course of our research, we read that a blind cat might feel safer coming down stairs backwards. Olive was encouraged to take this approach, but she would have no part of it. She wanted to do it her way. After a little coaxing she began to feel safe descending and is now racing up and down the stairs!

What Olive does not have at this point is a sense of height. As she gets more confident, she wants to do what cats do and that's jump. She has to be monitored as her landings are not smooth and at this point she could injure herself.

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Bad news, good news

by Holly Roulston

The bad news ... On 1 December 2017, we received an email notice from Shoppers Drug Mart explaining that they had recently reviewed their Optimum Card online points donation program and had made the decision (effective 1 January 2018) to no longer give their customers the option of donating loyalty points to the charity of their choice. They indicated that the points currently available on our FFN card should be used up by 31 January 2018.

The explanation given for cancelling the charity card program was that Shoppers Drug Mart feels it can provide stronger support with a tighter focus through their LOVE.YOU. program, which helps thousands of Canadian women put their mental, physical, and spiritual health first.

I have written to Shoppers Drug Mart to say how disappointed I was with their decision and to explain that FFN relies on the points donated to our card to purchase cat food and items used in our fundraising. If you would like to share your opinion with Shoppers Drug Mart, you can email shoppersloveyou@shoppersdrugmart.ca. If enough people feel the same way, perhaps they will consider reversing their decision.

The good news ... there is a solution. It is possible to transfer your Optimum points to an individual. I am applying for a new card. Once I have this card, you will be able to transfer your points to me and I pledge to use those points for the sole benefit of FFN. As in the past, purchases made with points will be posted to the FFN Facebook page.

If you have been saving up your points to donate to FFN, please stay tuned for the new card info which will be provided in an upcoming newsletter, as well as at the AGM (if the new card is available at that time).

If you have any questions, you can reach me at Holly@felinefriends.ca or 519-284-2649.

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Olive has no trouble finding the cat toys throughout the house and has discovered the cat scratch post and uses it with enthusiasm!

There may be more hurdles for Olive and lessons for us on this journey, but we look forward to helping her to get well and to find a special forever home.

Olive's spay surgery is scheduled for mid-February at which time her eye enucleations will be completed. We will wish her a speedy recovery so this little kitten can get back to doing what kittens do ... playing, eating, cuddling, sleeping and doing it all over again.

If you would like to donate towards the cost of Olive's upcoming surgery cheques can be mailed to Feline Friends Network, ATTN: Sharon Morrice at 134 Brunswick Street, Stratford, Ontario, N5A 3M1 with "Olive" in the re: line. Or you can make a direct donation through the Canada Helps website – choose general and type "Olive" in the comment section.

<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/feline-friends-network-of-stratford/#donate-now-pane>





Animal Aid Foundation

Funding Local Animal Charities

FROM THE BOTTOM OF OUR HEARTS

We would like to thank the Animal Aid Foundation for choosing FFN to receive a grant of \$2,000 for the 2017 year! The Animal Aid Foundation was established to address the issue of animal over-population and homeless pets by financially supporting the spay/neuter programs of animal charities. Please check them out at <http://www.animalaidfoundation.ca/>

And a giant 'THANK YOU' to Mrs. Helen Hinton, who generously donated \$1,000 through the London Community Foundation to FFN to help us help "The Village" of Listowel as they humanely solved their "cat overpopulation" problem. If you are on Facebook and would like to follow the progress of this wonderful community cat colony and its dedicated volunteers, please visit them at "Village Feral Felines" <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1174729685991603/>.

SHOW US YOUR HEART!

One again, Global Pet Food in Stratford has picked FFN as their charity of choice for this year's "Show Us Your Heart" Campaign. The campaign will run from 11 to 24 February. Be sure to stop into the store over that time to pick up all your pet supplies and to show your support by purchasing a heart in honour or in memory of a beloved pet, friend or family member.



Spay it forward!

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. It takes place each year on the last Tuesday of February. This year World Spay Day will be 27 February 2018.

FFN is happy to announce that the following Veterinary Clinics will be participating in World Spay Day 2018 by offering discounted spays/neuters on selected dates during the week of February 26th.

- Avon Pet Hospital (dates to be confirmed)
- Coventry Animal Hospital – 28 February
- Kirkton Veterinary – week of 26 February
- Mitchell Veterinary Services – 27 February
- Perth Veterinary Services – week of 26 February
- Romeo Pet Hospital – 26 & 27 February & 1 March
- St. Marys Veterinary Clinic – week of 26 February

Clinics that have confirmed their participation have received posters for promotion. We are also working on a media release and some social media posts. Please help us spread the word!

Also, please note that vaccinations may be required before your pet is spayed/neutered so inquire about vaccinations before booking a surgery appointment.

People that don't like cats haven't met the right one yet.

– Deborah A. Edwards, DVM

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
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