

# cat tales

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK



## Jack and Samson – an unusual bond

by Dawn Benson, with an introduction by Holly Roulston

*As FFN's foster/adoption coordinators, Marg and I would like to thank Dawn Benson for adopting this unusual bonded pair! In the four years that we have been fostering and adopting out cats through FFN, this is one of the best happy-ending stories yet.*

*Samson, the black-and-white cat pictured above, initially gave Marg and me great cause for concern. After months and months of care in two different foster homes, he hadn't improved very much – although our TLC volunteer Kim J. was starting to make progress with him. Still, we were wondering where we could "put him" when there was literally a knock on the door of his foster home – someone had discovered an injured kitten by the side of the road.*

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## Functional feline forms

FFN has a growing number of online forms to help streamline the many requests we receive, and they're mobile-friendly! They save time, both for our volunteers and for those who need our assistance. No more phone tag! Here are some of the new forms we have created. Find them under 'Quick Links' on the right-hand sidebar of our website at <http://felinefriends.ca>.

**PRE-ADOPTION INFORMATION FORM** – If you want to learn more about any of our foster cats or kittens, set up a meet-and-greet, or if you're thinking of adopting, this form makes it easy.

**LOW INCOME SPAY/NEUTER APPLICATION** – Are you in financial difficulty and want to request our assistance in 'fixing' your cat/kitten? This form gets the process started.

**CAT BEHAVIOUR ADVICE REQUEST** – Is your cat peeing outside the box? Our volunteers have probably gone through the same thing at one time or another! We offer free advice to help keep kitties in their homes instead of being surrendered to rescues or shelters due to behavioural problems.

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*Samson's foster mom took the kitten into care and named him Jack. After a week or so of keeping the two cats separate, we decided to introduce them, hoping that this little kitten with a BIG personality might be able to help Samson with his progress ... Well, it was love at first sight!*

*Because Jack's companionship was making a world of difference for Samson, we knew that we had to try to keep these two new friends together! And so we are sooooo thankful and thrilled that Dawn offered to adopt these unlikely pals.*

*As we have said many times over, FFN could not do any of this without everyone who plays a part in trapping, fostering, and adopting. These are the happy ending stories we hope for and they give us a reason to keep going. Here is Dawn's story:*

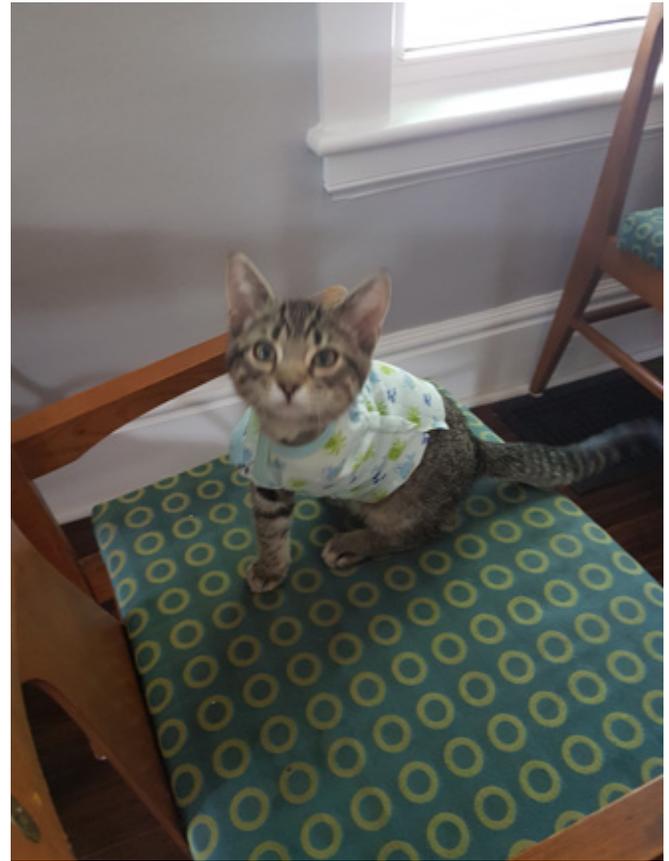
In November 2017, our beloved 16-year-old cat Rusty became very ill and, after a long fight, we had to let her go. Six months later, our cat Jerry also suddenly took ill. Again, we tried everything to save him but he also crossed the rainbow bridge, in only his 9th year, .

During this period, I was in the process of becoming a foster parent for Feline Friends Network. Our remaining cat, Prudence, seemed lonely. Since I was still grieving for Rusty and Jerry and wasn't ready to adopt another cat, I hoped fostering would give Prue some company.

When I saw the video of Samson and Jack on the FFN Facebook page, I knew instantly that I wanted to foster them. But when I went to meet them for the first time, I knew that I couldn't JUST foster them – I wanted to adopt them.

Little Jack stole my heart. His injured leg did not slow him down in the least. And while Samson was so timid and wary of humans that I knew it might take time to gain his trust, I was confident that our family could do it and that we could give both of these cats a happy life.

When I introduced them to our house, Jack had no problem making himself right at home. Samson on the other hand was terrified! For the



first two weeks, he refused to leave my closet and our entire family took turns lying in the closet to talk to him, pet him, and feed him by hand.

Jack helped Samson feel secure. It was obvious that Samson loved the little kitten and that little Jack gave him joy and comfort. When Samson meowed, Jack would run to him and reassure him. I have never seen this much love between two cats.

Samson gradually felt comfortable enough to explore the house at night, deciding to make his home in the basement (interestingly, before moving in with us, he was living in the basement level of his foster home). Our family began the process over again – going to the basement, lying on the floor, and letting Samson come to us for treats and affection.

Then, suddenly, Samson no longer wanted to be “basement Samson.” He came upstairs to get attention, to wrestle with his little bro Jack, and to be part of the family.

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While Samson was trying to accustom himself to his new home, Jack had to have his injured leg amputated. When Holly brought him back from surgery, I was expecting him to be sore and frail. Not even close! Keeping him calm was pretty much impossible!

Jack hated his cone and we tried three different ones before finding one he could not rip off. As his incision healed, he started to scratch at it with his back foot. Thankfully, my mother-in-law is crafty and was able to make him a shirt out of one of my son's old onesies. It was perfect! Not only did it prevent him from ripping open his stitches with his back claws, as an added bonus, he looked cute as heck!

While I can't honestly say that Prue is totally thrilled with her new little brothers, she does seem to be adjusting to having them in the family. Samson and Jack have brought joy and fun back into our home and – of course – we are adopting them permanently.

I know that Jerry and Rusty would be happy that we took in two cats who – through no fault of their own – were left to fend for themselves on the streets, as Rusty, Jerry, and Prue were when they came into our lives many years ago.

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**WE THANK YOU FOR THE HONOUR**

Our sincere thanks to all those who have chosen to honour the memory of their loved ones with donations to Feline Friends Network, by naming us as a suggested charity in a family member's memorial, or by making contributions in lieu of gifts on special occasions such as birthdays and weddings. We do not take these, or any, donations for granted, and we promise to use them well, to make a difference in as many cats' lives as possible.

*You cannot look at a sleeping cat and feel tense.*  
– Jane Pauley

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**FOSTER APPLICATION** – Thinking of fostering a feline? This form gives us all the basic info we need to determine which types of foster cats/kittens would be best suited to your home.

**TNR/BARN CAT APPLICATION** – If you've been feeding feral cats in your neighbourhood or if you want to get your barn cats fixed before they multiply, use this form to find out if you qualify for our Trap-Neuter-Return or Barn Cat Spay/Neuter programs.

**SUBSCRIBE TO OUR MAILING LIST** – New to the FFN home page! Just enter your email address to subscribe to our e-newsletter, *cat tales*, as well as receive the occasional notice to our cat-loving community. We promise not to bombard you with messages, and we will never share your address. If you've received this newsletter, you're probably already a subscriber, but why not pass the link on to a friend or relative who is also fond of felines?

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**DOING IT FOR DAD**

FFN's Father's Day Online Auction Fundraiser raked in just over \$1,500, making it our best auction yet! With each online auction, we pick up a few new bidders – welcome! And a warm thank you to our "regulars" for continuing to bid on items to support our efforts.

FFN plans to continue running these auctions whenever we have accumulated enough good quality/fun items. If you have any gift cards, new/vintage items or cat-themed goods, we are accepting donations and we would love to hear from you.

Arrangements can be made to pick up smaller items. If you would like to donate larger items we would be happy to add them to the auction and have the winning bidder pick up the items directly from your home when the auction ends.

*Cats are designated friends.*  
– Norman Corwin



## Dramatic beginnings and happy endings

by Monica Taschner with an intro by Marg Usprech

*About this time last year, my fellow FFN foster/adoption co-ordinator Holly and I decided to take a much-needed break. A day away at the One of A Kind show in Toronto sounded perfect and we purchased tickets. But a day not thinking of cats? Hmm ... not going to happen.*

*The moment Holly stepped in my door, foster cat Pumpkin decided to give birth. We spent the next 6+ hours helping this poor girl, gently removing the placentas from the kittens as they were in danger of suffocating and tying off their umbilical cords. By the end of it, we had NINE (!) kittens, one exhausted mom cat, and two extremely tired volunteers.*

*Pumpkin's troubles did not end there as she subsequently developed mastitis and refused to feed or clean her kittens. There were a lot of long nights of bottle feeding until mom recovered and took over the task. Once the kittens were weaned and everyone was spayed/neutered, they all – including Pumpkin – went off to their forever homes.*

*We often wonder about the cats and kittens we have fostered so we were pretty thrilled when we received this from Simba's adoptive mom, Monica.*



Hi Feline Friends Network,

It's Simba! Do you remember me? I used to be called Buff Boy. Yeah, it's me! Can you believe it's been a whole year since I was adopted! It's crazy how fast time flies!

I wanted to let you know that life has been great this past year. I have two humans (Mom and Dad) who love me very much, as well as an older fur-sister, Sam! My humans spoil me – I have so many toys AND I get to cuddle with them in bed! My favourite time to cuddle is before they wake up to go to work, around 5:30 am. I'm also really good at playing fetch. When my humans throw my favourite mousey, I chase after it and bring it back to them so they can throw it again.

I do like cuddling with my sister, Sam, but I like chasing her even more! It didn't take long for me to grow bigger than her. Another thing I like to do is sit in the window and watch the birds. I'm waiting for the day when they fly too close. And I LOVE water! One day, I jumped in the bath with dad! He was NOT happy, but he laughed about it later.

Life has been so great since I was adopted and now that I'm older, I understand better how much FFN changed my life. You saved my cat-mom and all my cat-sisters. You helped them find loving homes just like me! Thank you for all that you do. I love my fur-ever home!

Love, Simba



## FFN WISH LIST

Just a reminder to keep FFN in mind when spending your PC Optimum Points! Pick up cat food or a seasonal item that we could use in one of our upcoming fundraisers. Here are some of the things on our wish list:

- Purina Kitten or Cat Chow
- canned cat food
- heated pet beds
- Cat Attract cat litter and powder
- New or gently-used cat furniture and scratching posts
- Feliway diffusers and spray
- digital kitchen scales
- Litter Locker replacement bags
- treats (Temptations, etc.)
- gift cards or new items for our online auctions

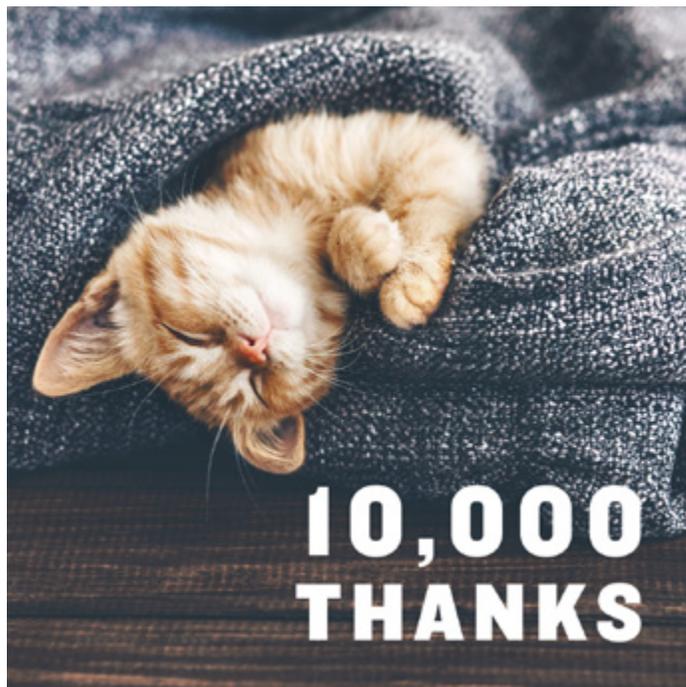
## 2018 WINE RAFFLE FUNDRAISER!

Preparations for this year's wine raffle fundraiser are well underway.

Again this year, **FIRST PRIZE** will be a selection of fine wines and LCBO gift cards valued at \$1,000. **SECOND PRIZE** includes CRP Adirondack chairs with a matching table and a nice bottle of red wine, while **THIRD PRIZE** will be 4 tickets to the Stratford Festival (to take in 2 separate shows with a friend) and dinners at Bijou and Foster's Inn.

If you have sold FFN wine raffle tickets in the past, we will be in touch with you when the tickets are ready to see if you could assist us again this year. If you are a new member and would like to sell a book or two of tickets (15 tickets per book), please contact [Holly@felinefriends.ca](mailto:Holly@felinefriends.ca) for more details.

The winners will be drawn on National Feral Cat Day – Tuesday, 16 October 2018.



## 10,000 THANKS!

Feline Friends is extremely grateful to all who made donations through Canada Helps in June – with each dollar giving us an entry to win \$10,000 during the Great Canadian Giving Challenge. The annual contest awards the grand prize to a registered Canadian charity to further its mission. In June, we received a total of \$1,790 through Canada Helps! Although FFN didn't win this year, we still want to give ten-thousand thanks to our generous donors for helping us help more cats!

*If there was any petting to be done ... he chose to do it. Often he would sit looking at me, and then, moved by a delicate affection, come and pull at my coat and sleeve until he could touch my face with his nose, and then go away contented.*

– Charles Dudley Warner

*If you want to know the character of a man, find out what his cat thinks of him.*

– Anonymous

NEWSLETTER EDITOR  
garet markvoort

