

cat tales

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK



Oscar's story

by Jessi Penk

As a kitten, Oscar was discarded and left to fend for himself at a farm. Luckily he was at the farm of people who let him stay in their barn and knew to contact FFN about finding a home for this friendly guy. Since we were considering adding a kitten to our home, we decided to meet Oscar. I was hesitant – I thought a barn cat would never want to live indoors with a pre-schooler running around and a dog to boot. I couldn't have been more wrong. Oscar fit right in as soon as he walked in the door and has been part of our family ever since.

He bonded with my son immediately, becoming William's little shadow from the first. He loves playing with three-year-old Macie and keeps up with her limitless energy. And Hailey (our puggle) took to Oscar right away, sharing her water bowl and couch with him within a couple of hours.

When he came to FFN, Oscar had a wound/infection on his chest/neck from a cat fight and couldn't be neutered right away.

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Edward, a special foster cat

by Brenda Ford

Edward (a.k.a. Teddy) is a young, grey tabby with perky ears and a cute face. When Edward first joined my household as an FFN foster cat, he was placed in a room on his own. I spent hours playing with him and trying to cuddle him, but no matter how many times I visited him and how much time I spent with him, Edward would frantically hiss and try to hide when I first entered the room.

Although his eyesight is fine, the vet told us that there may be some neurological lack of coordination that causes Edward to be scared because he is unable to readily identify who or what is coming towards him. His back legs are also somewhat uncoordinated, although now that he has the run of the house, he has no trouble going up or down the stairs. So what if he occasionally misses a couple of steps in his rush to get to where he wants to go!

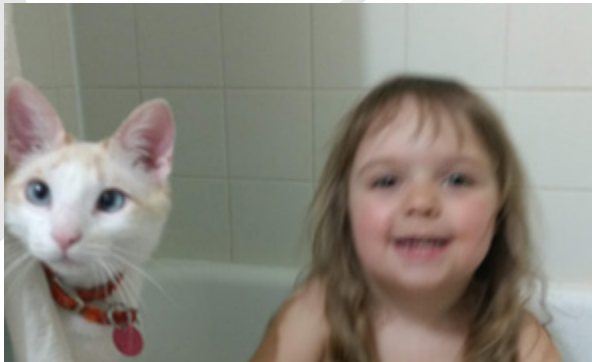
Edward is a keen observer of the bird life outside the bay window of my living room. As the birds swoop low, aiming for the berries on a tree on my front lawn, Edward leaps high into the air to try to catch them. Another favourite spot for Edward is outdoors in the patio where,

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Instead he came home with us for a couple weeks of TLC (and antibiotics) on a foster-to-adopt basis. The day we had to take Oscar away for his neuter, Hailey was miserable. She didn't greet us when we came home, she didn't want to eat, she just sat on the couch looking sad. When Oscar arrived back home, Hailey went absolutely crazy; guess our pup loves the kitty as much as the rest of us.

We consider ourselves so lucky to have met Oscar through FFN. It's a great feeling to know that there are people who genuinely care about what happens to all those kitties who are lost/abandoned. In a world where we hear about so much ugliness, we are living the story of a happy ending. Oscar brings us so much joy – he is my morning conversation partner when I get up and everyone is still sleeping, he is William's neck warmer and hang out buddy, he is Macie's playmate and racing partner, and he is Hailey's annoying little brother who loves to wrestle, then snuggle. He is a gift.



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if the weather is fine, he spends most of the day while my other five cats are enjoying their siestas on every available bit of furniture in my living room.

Food is a great motivator for Edward. In the morning and again in the evening, he twines himself around my ankles and looks up at me beseechingly. I can pick him up then and pet and cuddle him, but once his appetite has been sated, Edward might grudgingly allow me to pet him again – but only if nothing else is going on that piques his interest!

This special-needs kitty needs a special person to adopt him and spend enough time with him to fully gain his trust. Edward loves playing with my other cats and would enjoy having the companionship of another cat. To make an appointment to meet Edward, please contact the Feline Friends Network at info@felinefriends.ca.

Poets generally love cats – because poets have no delusions about their own superiority.

– Marion Garretty



Adventures in kitten fostering

by Brittiny Bourgeois

Fostering kittens is probably one of the most rewarding things to do, yet one of the hardest. My three most recent foster kittens were only two weeks old when I got them, and they were in rough shape. It had been a while since I had fostered kittens, and I'd forgotten about the lack of sleep it entails! But it's worth it.

When these kittens arrived, they had very bad eye infections. It was so sad to see but FFN got them the care they needed quickly and within a couple of days they started looking great!

Bottle feeding was a challenge at first, but once they got the hang of it, they weren't shy about letting me know every two hours that it was mealtime – they were a very vocal group! And once they'd taken to the bottle, they weren't eager to give it up. Weaning was another struggle with two of them outright refusing to consider eating from a bowl at first.

I have loved watching Lucy, Desi, and Ricky – as I call them – grow and discover new things. When they first started playing, they were still very wobbly (so cute!), but it didn't take long before they were playing with anything and everything they could get their paws on!

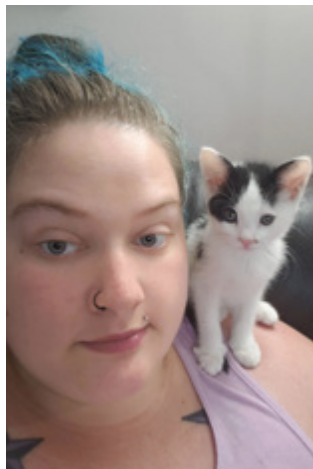
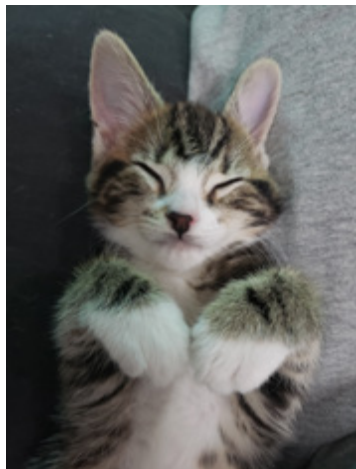
Lucy (left, below and above) is an adventurer and just wants to explore and play. Ricky (above



right, and bottom right), also loves to play but is more laid back. And sweet Desi (centre, above and below) is a little cuddler, always wanting attention.

At first I tried to keep them separated from my own four cats, but it's not easy getting into a room when three fast little kittens are trying to get out! When they snuck out, they loved chasing my cats or climbing the cat trees, but they knew they'd be put back into a different room so sometimes they would hide under furniture for hours – they were too smart!

It will be hard to say goodbye to them, but I try to remember that I did a good thing by helping them and that, once they go, I can help more kittens. I just hope they will get the perfect furrever homes they deserve!



ENFORCING ANIMAL CRUELTY LAWS IN ONTARIO: WHAT HAPPENS NOW

Last month, we reported that the OSPCA will no longer enforce Ontario's animal cruelty laws. The following text is from "Ontario launches animal-cruelty hotline, new chief inspector appointed," an article published 28 June 2019 at <https://globalnews.ca/news/5442542/ontario-animal-cruelty-hotline/>.

Ontario's solicitor general has launched a new 24-hour animal-cruelty hotline. She also named a new chief inspector to oversee a temporary anti-cruelty-enforcement regime. A spokeswoman says the government has appointed Ontario Provincial Police Insp. Paula Milne as the new chief.

In March, the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals said it was getting out of enforcement by today. The association has had police-like powers for 100 years. The province is now revamping the law and is expected to introduce legislation in the fall.

The temporary regime [began] Saturday [29 June, 2019] and will include a team of officers with expertise in inspecting zoos, aquariums, horses, and livestock.

Residents can call 1-833-9ANIMAL with cruelty concerns.

Editor's note – the website of Kitchener/ Waterloo & Stratford/Perth Humane Societies



(<https://kwsphumane.ca/services/report-cruelty>) states the following: To report cases of animal cruelty, abandonment or neglect, please call: The Province of Ontario 24/7 Hotline at 1-833-9ANIMAL (1-833-926-4625) or the Humane Society of Kitchener Waterloo and Stratford Perth at 519-745-5615 or your local police department.



THE GIFT OF A BEQUEST

Feline Friends Network is extremely honoured to have received a very generous bequest from the estate of the late Larry Waldie, who passed away on 21 January 2019 in his 60th year.

We would like to express our deepest sympathy to his wife, Sandy Waldie, his family, and his friends.

The Directors of FFN recognize the responsibility to use the gift of a bequest wisely, to the greatest benefit of the cats that come into our care and to further our mission to humanely reduce cat overpopulation and homelessness in our community.

Larry, we thank you for this act of kindness.

I saw the most beautiful cat today. It was sitting by the side of the road, its two front feet neatly and graciously together. Then it gravely swished around its tail to completely encircle itself. It was so fit and beautifully neat, that gesture, and so self-satisfied, so complacent."

– Ann Morrow Lindbergh



FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK RECEIVES FIRST COMMUNITY GRANT

After submitting our first application for a Community Grant from the City of Stratford, FFN has received \$2,500! Although we weren't granted the amount originally requested (\$10,000), we are pleased that the City has helped to support our efforts to reduce cat overpopulation in 2019. Particular thanks to councilor and well-known animal advocate, Cody Sebben, for speaking up on our behalf!

FFN's expenditures in 2018 were over \$90,000, mostly comprised of veterinary fees for spay/neuter surgeries and medical care of cats in our Trap-Neuter-Return, Foster/Adoption and Low-Income Spay-Neuter Assistance Programs. FFN is almost entirely funded through donations, fundraisers, and membership fees.

THANKS TO OUR FUNDRAISING VOLUNTEERS!

15 and 22 June were rewarding Saturdays for FFN! We're grateful for the successful Bake/Puddy Product sales held at Stratford's Pet Valu and Feed-All Pet Centre. Thanks to April Wagler, Patricia Burnell, all the great bakers and, of course, our hosts, the sales raised a total of over \$580! Also, thank you to Rachelle Czartorynskyj, who held a garage sale that earned another \$200 for FFN. Thanks to everyone who volunteered their time and talents, and to all who purchased items. We couldn't continue our spay/neuter and foster/adoption programs without you!

April Wagler (foreground) and Pat Burnell (background) at one of FFN's recent Bake/Puddy Products sales.



HERE'S TO PAT!

There are volunteers ... there are super-volunteers ... and then there is Pat Burnell.

You might have seen Pat at FFN events, at markets, or at craft shows, with her signature cat ears and a smile. She can generally be found industriously knitting one of the hats, toys for kitties (and kiddies), sweaters, mittens, kitty caps, cat mats, and much more, that make up her impressive display of "Puddy Products." Pat's creative mind and productive fingers never rest, resulting in a huge variety of beautifully knitted and sewn items, with all proceeds from sales donated to FFN.

To give you an idea of the scale of Pat's one-woman feline fundraising, over the years her Puddy Products have raised over \$20,000! And, as if that isn't enough, Pat also hosted a series of "Upscale Yard Sale" evenings which generated over \$9,000! We estimate that Pat has single-handedly surpassed \$30,000 in funds raised – it's amazing what one person can achieve!

Pat's dedication to the FFN cause doesn't end there. She has also been a board member and – along with husband, Larry Baswick – a builder of cat shelters, as well as host to many meetings, maker of excellent culinary creations and, last but most definitely not least, Mum of many lucky adopted cats.

Thank you, Pat, for your unstinting generosity and your unwavering commitment.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
garet markvoort

