



SAFE HAVEN
No-Kill Shelter For Cats

The Scratching Post

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Comments on the Scratching Post? Send ideas and suggestions to cbiond@nc.rr.com.

All About Volunteers

Sixth Tuxedo Cat Ball!

Why do we have the Tuxedo Cat Ball? So that we can save the lives of helpless and lost cats and kittens.

The proceeds of this year's ball will be spent on the expansion of the SAFE Care Feline Spay and Neuter Clinic. We need to double the capacity of our clinic, which means we need to build, equip and staff a second surgery suite. Just the first phase of this important mission will cost close to \$50,000.

We know you will have a fun and fulfilling evening at the Ball AND you will be helping us in a major way to go from sterilizing 1,700 cats a year to over 3,000!

The Ball will be held Friday, April 16, from 7-11 pm at Marbles Kids Museum, 201 East Hargett Street. Tickets are only \$75 per person, much less than many comparable events! Great things will be happening at the event, including:

- Jazz melodies by the Swingin'

Chads

- Games and Raffles – how does a 3.2 karat diamond tennis bracelet or an I Touch sound?
- Silent Auction for over 200 practical and interesting items. Bidding will start at 20% of retail value!
- Live Auction – Ten unique selections -- maybe a trip to the Daytona 500, a Fighter Pilot for a Day experience, or a Hannah Montana 3-photo Collage!

For tickets go to www.safehavenforcats.org and follow the links to purchase tickets. Tickets will also be available at the door.

Be a SHFC Ambassador!

SAFE Haven for Cats is hitting the road this spring both to educate the general public about shelter cat adoption and spay/neuter, and to spotlight the creative efforts of our volunteers and make some money for the shelter.

Our volunteers are the driving

force behind the “re-tail” side of SAFE Haven. From handmade catnip mice to ceramic ornaments to etched wineglasses, our volunteers dream up and create items to sell at special events. Not only do you donate your time to help at the shelter, but you donate more time and money to buy materials for or to craft lovingly-made works of art.

Look for SAFE Haven at:

Saturday, April 17 -- Great Grapes! Festival, Koka Booth Amphitheatre, Cary, 11 am to 7 pm. We get volunteers, donors, adopters, and clinic clients from Cary. The Great Grapes! Festival is a high-end event with admission prices \$25 and up. SAFE Haven volunteers are hard at work creating painted and etched wineglasses and wine charms. Volunteers are needed to work the booth, or help with set up and take down.

Saturday, April 24, May 22 & June 26 -- WAG Pet Boutique, Stonehenge Market, Creedmore Road, Raleigh, 11 am to 2 pm. Our friends at WAG have us down once a month to showcase a few cats and kittens, and talk to their customers about SAFE Haven and its mission. Volunteers needed to staff the informational table.

(More Opportunities on page 3)

Get your tickets now!

Sixth Annual
Tuxedo Cat Ball

at

Marbles Kids Museum!

Lost Cat – Found!

By Cathy Blondi

Last September I was walking in my neighborhood when I noticed posters stuck on various poles along the streets. When I got closer I could see that there was a photo of a beautiful cat on the poster. It turns out that beautiful cat belonged to someone in my neighborhood, and he'd disappeared on September 18. This is the story of what his owner did to find him – it has a happy ending, so read on!

Flo Gans, my neighbor, had just returned from a trip to New York with her four cats, and was moving them from her SUV to the house. Suddenly HoneyHoo, a young, shy male whom she'd adopted from Second Chance five years earlier, bolted. She tried to catch him, but he was too scared and he darted into the woods behind her house.

HoneyHoo had spent his first four months in the wild with his mother and was petrified of people. So one of Flo's first actions was to get a couple of Havahart traps. To make the trap look and smell safe, she put some dirty clothes and towels around the trap. No HoneyHoo, but the opossums and raccoons had a fine time ripping the clothes and towels into little bits.

Flo baited the traps with some of HoneyHoo's favorites – his raw diet, plus sardines, salmon and tuna. Again, the opossums and raccoons absolutely loved it, but she didn't catch

Eat Pizza for SHFC!

On Friday, April 23, California Pizza Kitchen will donate **20%** of your check to SHFC if you bring in one of their fundraiser flyers.

You can use the flyer for dine-in, take-out, or curbside orders. Pick up some flyers from the shelter or download the flyer from the SHFC website, and hand them out to all the pizza-lovers you know. Remember, whatever you spend benefits the shelter!

a glimpse of HoneyHoo.

As the days went by, she tried a number of other approaches. She sprayed her urine and the urine of her other cats around the edges of the yard; she left a used cat box outside; she walked Palomino Puss (HoneyHoo's best friend) around the yard; she put flyers everywhere and made sure the local mailman and all vets offices within a five-mile radius had one; she even consulted several animal communicators and a psychic.

There were several possible sightings of HoneyHoo in the next few weeks, but none of them was by Flo. One of those sightings happened to be by my husband – I'd pointed the flyer out to him, and a couple days later he said that he was pretty sure he'd seen the cat in our overgrown back yard.

We called Flo, and ended up putting her traps in a couple of large, old garbage cans in our yard. (Large garbage cans turned out to be a great idea for protecting the traps and making them seem cave-like and safe. So safe, in fact, that we had to up-end one of the traps to get a lazy raccoon out of it.) Again, lots of opossums and raccoons, but no further sign of HoneyHoo.

Flo went through several sets of flyers during the fall. She learned that the best design was to put the flyer in a large plastic bag, then make tabs on the corners with duct tape. The flyers could be pinned to poles using the tabs, so that no rain could get through holes in the plastic. Every time there was a sighting, she would update the content of the flyer to let everyone know where the last sighting was.

By the end of October Flo was losing hope, particularly since she had to fly to Florida for a few days to check on an ill relative. She decided that when she returned from her trip she'd take down the flyers and give up her search. She returned to Raleigh on

Nov. 3, and on Nov. 4 she looked out her back window and glimpsed HoneyHoo in the back yard. He ran away when she called him, but he was still in the neighborhood!

Flo had a second sighting of HoneyHoo a few days later. And then on the morning of November 15th she went out to check her traps and she saw a brown and black tail – perhaps another raccoon? – no, it was HoneyHoo! After eight weeks and two days, HoneyHoo was finally home.

HoneyHoo was pretty scared, and it took him quite a while in the guest bathroom to readjust. Flo sat with him and talked and sang to him, and he eventually approached her. After a trip to the vet to make sure he was OK, he got reacquainted with his housemates (particularly Palomino Puss, who'd been waiting impatiently outside the bathroom door).



HoneyHoo, very happy at home.

Other than losing quite a bit of weight, HoneyHoo survived his outside adventure quite well. But it's clear that he's more appreciative of being in where it's safe and warm, and where dinnertime comes regularly. Flo says that he's gotten distinctly more affectionate with her, and more tolerant of other people.

After it was all over, Flo decided to change her kitty's name to HoneyHoo (which had been his nickname), from Houdini – after all, she didn't want him pulling any more disappearing acts!

ASK THE VET ... *About Feline Heartworm Disease*

by *Betsy Pethick, D.V.M.*

Most of us are quite familiar with heartworm disease in dogs, but heartworm disease exists in cats, too. There are some similarities and some notable differences in how the two species deal with this infection.

As with dogs, heartworm infection in cats happens when a mosquito carrying infective, microscopic-size larvae bites a cat for a blood meal. The larvae develop as they travel through the tissues and eventually settle in the blood vessels of the lungs, where they become mature worms. The average time from mosquito bite to maturity is about 8 months for cats and 7 months for dogs.

Once they reach adulthood, the heartworms can mate and release offspring (called microfilariae) into the bloodstream. The cycle begins again when a mosquito takes a blood meal from an infected cat and ingests microfilariae.

Cats are actually much more resistant to heartworm infection than dogs. In fact, some cats appear to be able to rid themselves of infection spontaneously. It is assumed that such cats develop a strong immune response to the heartworms, which results in the death of the parasites.

Cats typically have fewer and smaller worms than dogs, and the lifespan of the worms is shorter, about 2 to 3 years, compared to 5 to 7 years in dogs. In experimental infections of heartworm larvae in cats, the percentage of worms developing to maturity is low (0 to 25%) compared to dogs (40 to 90%).

However, heartworms do not need to develop to maturity to cause significant pulmonary damage in cats. Newly arriving worms and the subsequent death of these worms can result in acute pulmonary inflammation. In fact, the initial phases of infection often appear to be asthma or allergic bronchitis.

Other signs of feline heartworm disease can be very non-specific, such as intermittent vomiting, lethargy, weight loss, and poor appetite. Respiratory signs include panting, gagging, rapid breathing, and difficulty breathing. Sudden death with no previous signs can also occur.

Diagnosis of heartworm disease is more difficult in cats than it is in dogs. Because of the typically small number of worms that cats have, antigen blood tests are not always accurate. Antibody tests indicate previous exposure to heartworms but are not definitive for a current infection. The diagnostic plan for heartworm disease in cats may include radiographs (x-rays), cardiac ultrasound, blood testing, and (if sudden death occurs) necropsy evaluation.

Treatment of feline heartworm disease is complicated by the fact that there are currently no safe or effective products approved for this use in the United States. Most cats with heartworm disease that are not demonstrating clinical signs are simply allowed time for spontaneous cure to occur.

If chest x-rays or clinical signs indicate lung disease, supportive treatment with gradually decreasing doses of prednisolone can be used to reduce inflammation. Cats with severe clinical signs require more aggressive

treatment, such as cage rest, oxygen therapy, and bronchodilators.

Prevention is key when it comes to dealing with feline heartworm disease. There are four products available (two orally administered and two topical products) for heartworm prevention in cats. Your veterinarian can discuss the options with you and assess the risk of heartworm disease to your feline friends.

Be a SHFC Ambassador!

(continued from page 1)

Saturday & Sunday, May 1 & 2 -- SHFC Open House, in conjunction with North Shore Animal League's Pet Adoptathon 2010. Tours, adoptions, microchipping – they're all a part of our open houses. This weekend, animal adoptions will be occurring all over the country and SAFE Haven hopes some of our cats and kittens will find fur-ever homes! Volunteers needed for refreshments, cleaning crews, and to just be on hand to answer questions or make connections.

Saturday, May 1 -- Meet in the Street, Wake Forest, 10 am to 4 pm. We'll have an informational booth set up, along with selling a few small goodies such as catnip mice and ceramic ornaments. Volunteers needed to sit at the booth.

Saturday & Sunday, May 15 & 16 -- Artsposure, Moore Square, Raleigh. Once again, the purr-fect place to show off the artistic side of SAFE Haven! Volunteers needed to help with set up and take down, or to sit at our booth.

Saturday & Sunday, May 22 & 23 -- WRAL Wellness Weekend, Fairgrounds. With 80,000+ people expected, there's no chance we'll miss this opportunity. We need DOUBLE the volunteers since we have 2 tables! Info booth sitters are inside the building, flea market booth sitters are outside, under the tent.



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Spotlight On...

Lisa Loiselle

Saturday Morning Regular and Crafter Extraordinaire



Lisa stands in front of the beautiful quilt she donated to SAFE Haven.

Do your cats have middle names? Lisa Loiselle, a regular Saturday morning volunteer, considers her cats part of the family and deserving of a full battery of names, including (in one case) a 'family' middle name.

Lisa started volunteering at SAFE Haven as a Sunday morning cleaner in the summer of 2000. She'd been interested in volunteering at an animal shelter for a while, but realized that she'd end up with way too many animals if she volunteered at a shelter that euthanized them. One day while watching the news she saw Doug Eader, one of the founders of SAFE Haven, talking about the shelter, and everything clicked.

Because of a change in her schedule, Lisa moved to Thursday night cleaning after several years of Sunday mornings, and after a few more years on Thursdays, moved to Saturday mornings, where she regularly cleans the isolation area. In addition to cleaning, Lisa's a prolific mouse-maker, and she's an occasional outside ambassador for the shelter at events

like Meet in the Street and the annual holiday gift-wrap.

Lisa does a lot of crafting, including two baskets of hand-made cat-themed greeting cards that will be auctioned at the Tuxedo Cat Ball. (Check them out!) Some of you may have noticed the beautiful quilt that hung in the Garvey Drive lobby for a number of years, and now hangs in Durant Station – that's also Lisa's work.

Her favorite volunteer activity is her cleaning shift, though. She doesn't like twiddling her thumbs, and it's satisfying to keep moving and get her section of the shelter into shape every Saturday.

Lisa and her husband have three male cats of varying ages and sizes, all of whom have both first and middle names.

There's Rusty Joseph, a 12-year old orange tabby, who's a 20+ pound love-bug; Jasper Julian, a SAFE Haven graduate (formerly River), a brown and black tabby with a sweet, mellow

temperament; and Nemo Silas (formerly Flapjack), who went home in November of 2008 and who looks like a Maine coon, but is tiny compared to the other boys. They all get along, and Nemo can almost always convince one of his older brothers to play with him.

Lisa said that over the years she's been continually impressed with the commitment that SAFE Haven has to the cats. We take in cats with health problems or with behavior problems, and somehow get the cats adoptable and adopted.

She mentioned just a few – Orange-O and Torti, who were living outside and weren't real happy about being trapped but who eventually came around and were adopted, and Newton, who was very old and had a myriad of health problems but who was taken home by a volunteer and lived for another great year and a half.

Lisa adds that she's really proud to be associated with the shelter because of that commitment.

Adoptee Update – Moonpie and Waffle!

Many of you may remember Moonpie or Waffle. Moopie was a crazy black kitten who often looked like he'd just stuck his paw in a socket, and Waffle was a beautiful and playful little boy.

Moonpie and Waffle were adopted in November of 2008, and their human (Barbara Taylor) recently wrote in to provide an update and some pictures.

Barbara says, "Moonpie is still a wild man but that's what I love about him. He is very, very smart. He is also very affectionate."

Waffle was renamed Toulouse when he went home. "Toulouse, well, everyone loves Toulouse, everyone. He's goofy! His favorite hobby is knocking things off the counter....cell phones, q-tips, anything that he can push."

Barbara adds, "Both cats completely intimidate our boxer. They rub up against her and shower her with lots

of head bumps, and she just freezes till they're done. Hilarious! I wanted to let everyone know they're doing great."



Moonpie and Waffle posing for the camera.