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

All About Volunteers

Summer 'Fun'd Raising!

The name of the game this summer is 'FUN'd-RAISING! We have plenty going on, so please come out and have some fun WITH us while you make some money FOR us!

Wednesday, August 4 – another *California Pizza Kitchen Day!* You made it so successful last time (over \$300!) CPK has asked us to come back and do it again! Pick up flyers for the event at the shelter.

Friday and Saturday, August 6 & 7 – *Beer, Bourbon & BBQ* at the Koka Booth Amphitheater, 6 to 10 p.m. Friday, and noon to 6 p.m. Saturday. Very similar to the Great Grapes Festival, we'll have an informational booth to tell people in the Cary area what we're all about. Since this is a 2-day event, we really need some people at our booth! If you are interested, please sign up on the clipboard at the shelter.

Saturday & Sunday, September 18 & 19 – *Centerfest*, Downtown Durham. Lots and lots of arts & crafts, good food and fun. Join us at our booth while we pass out info and talk with the good people of Durham about feline adoption and spay/neuter.

Start saving your larger household items and other donations for our October

auction. This year's auction will be Saturday, October 9th at Raleigh Auctions & Estate Sales. This is a major fundraiser for us, and we appreciate your donations and participation!

Another fundraiser – we will be selling *Yankee Candles* from October 11 through October 25, just in time for holiday gift giving. If you would like to help sell Yankee Candles (recruit your friends, too!), sign up on the clipboard! This could be a big one for us, as Yankee Candle donates **40%** of sales back to SAFE Haven!

Volunteers needed for a "Fill A Truck" event at Wake Forest WalMart. On August 28th and October 30th we will be at the Wake Forest WalMart passing out our wish list, selling t-shirts, giving out important info, and hoping shoppers will buy some items for us and FILL OUR TRUCK! Event hours are 8 am to 5 pm both days. If you can come out for a few hours, please let us know. Know anyone with a box truck we can borrow?

If you know of a fundraiser you would be willing to participate in (and talk others into participating with you) we'd love to talk about it with you! Our volunteers are our **#1** fundraisers!

The Cat's Meow

If you've been to a volunteer

shift at the shelter lately you've probably been given a copy of *The Cat's Meow*, a volunteer guidebook that provides FAQs about volunteering at SAFE Haven plus a list of Dos and Don'ts.

Please, read it! If you're a new volunteer, there's a wealth of information about the shelter and your role in it. If you're an old volunteer (OK, if you've been volunteering for many years), there are some new procedures that you need to be aware of, and it's a great reminder of how the shelter operates.

If you haven't received your very own copy, please contact shelter staff for one.

TCB a Huge Success

What a wonderful event -- this year's Tuxedo Cat Ball netted over \$47,400 for the cats!

The new venue -- Marbles Kids Museum in downtown Raleigh -- was a big hit.

There was plenty of room for check-in; a tall, semi-circular desk ideal for retail sales; an expansive room in which to display auction items; and a large area for sponsor tables. And there was more than enough seating to accommodate everyone.

Plans are under way to return to Marbles in 2011.

A Mouse's Tale

How Liz Heward and fellow volunteers produce SAFE Haven's signature toys

By Sherry Johnson

In an ironic twist, charming little mice, fashioned from eye-catching fabrics and filled with top-quality stuffing and catnip, have become some of the best-known ambassadors for SAFE Haven.

Customers checking out at local veterinarians' offices are happy to peel off an additional dollar to grab a new toy for their cat from the large plastic jar with the SAFE Haven label. They appreciate the colorful patterns of the fabrics, the sturdy construction, the modest price and the no-kill shelter where their dollars will be put to good use.

Major paws up to Master Mouser **Liz Heward** and her crew of volunteer mouse makers, distributors, and contributors including Betty Harmon, Julie Horton, Lisa Loïselle, WRay Templeton, Inez Layton, Suzanne Caso, Linda Jones, Jayme Williams, Marilee Rose, Nancie McClendon, and Janet Hensel.

They create and put out to the public a product that brings in more than \$2,000 a year to SHFC but also works for SAFE Haven like the gecko works for GEICO: It spreads the word about the shelter and the spay/neuter clinic in a most enjoyable way.

It all started a year or so after SAFE Haven was founded in 1994 by Pam Miller and Doug Eader in their garage. Liz, a neighbor, had contributed some things that had belonged to her late cat. Before long she was a SAFE Haven volunteer, pitching in where she could from staffing a table at local cat shows or transporting kittens to other events.

"We've got to come up with something that people will remember us by," she thought.

At one event she attended, the Companion Animal Club at N.C. State University had made some mice to sell. "I bet I could make a mouse," Liz said.

She got out her Tiny Tailor sewing machine and went to work. Before long she had accumulated a stockpile of 75.

What should the price be?
"Everybody's got a dollar," Liz said.
"Let's just say a dollar."

At the first event where the mice were offered, they sold out on the first day.

Maybe there could be other outlets. Would local veterinarians or businesses where SAFE Haven volunteers worked be willing to put jars of mice out for their customers?
"Those took off like you can't believe," Liz said. "I'd make as many as I could."

It was time to enlist the help of other volunteers. The first group of mouse makers began to meet at the shelter once a month. When the group grew too large for the shelter, Liz moved the monthly gathering to her home.

The mice, made with eye-catching, durable fabric remnants (some donated, some purchased by Liz and other SHFC volunteers), are stuffed with high-quality pillow stuffing and grade A Cosmic Catnip.

Building a mouse is a nine-step process that includes using a pattern to cut the cloth, turning the fabric, stuffing the tummies and adding the jaunty felt ears and ribbon tails.

A group of 10 to 12 volunteers can produce 250 mice in an afternoon session.

The faces of the volunteers vary as they come and go depending on their schedules. "Everyone does what they like to do," Liz said. The group always welcomes newcomers to the mousemaking parties, which have a strong social component, a chance to get to know one another.

"You really don't have to know how to do anything," Liz added. Veterans are

happy to teach newbies.

The kind of fabric used ("a half yard of this and that") varies with the season. There are always mice garbed appropriately for major holidays -- Christmas, Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, Halloween Thanksgiving) -- as well as in an Americana theme for summer.

Mousemaking is much more than a fund-raising effort; it's a labor of love for Liz and the other volunteers. For that reason, she says, the price she charges will never rise above a dollar and every penny will always go to the cats.

"I still enjoy doing it," she said. "It's a cool little thing."

Although Liz continues to contribute to the mousemaking effort, she recently passed the torch to a long-time volunteer, Suzanne Caso. Suzanne says, "Please join us for a mouse-making fundraiser event the first Saturday of every month. Call me at 870-6353, or contact me by email: suz1204@nc.rr.com by Wednesday to confirm your attendance.

Adoptee Update – Milana!

Milana's adopter writes that Milana, now Daisy, is doing great. "She was a little shy for about the first 12 hours, but has made herself completely at home since. She runs to me when I open the door to her room, loves to be picked up and petted and is eating well.

"While Daisy has adjusted beautifully, Jack is still not too sure. He knows she is in the room and at first hissed every time he walked by. He no longer hisses and does at least look at her when I put her in a cage in the den.

"Thank you for all you do for so many wonderful cats, and especially for allowing me to give Daisy a home."

ASK THE VET ... *About Demodectic Mange Mites in Cats*

by Betsy Pethick, D.V.M.

We had our first experience with a demodex outbreak in about a dozen cats at SAFE Haven a few months ago. Although this species of mite causes dermatologic problems in dogs relatively frequently, it remains a pretty rare problem in cats. So, we found ourselves learning more about this parasite than we really wanted to know! Here's what we discovered:

Unlike dogs (who have only one species of demodex mites, *Demodex canis*) cats have two species of demodex mites: *Demodex cati* and *Demodex gatoi*.

Demodex cati looks and acts very similarly to *Demodex canis*. It is a long, slender mite that resides in the hair follicles. This mite may affect only small areas, such as the ears and face, resulting in localized hair loss and crusting. However, it can also lead to a generalized infestation.

Cats with generalized dermatitis should be screened for internal diseases that can lead to immunosuppression, such as feline leukemia virus (FeLV), feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) and diabetes.

Demodex gatoi looks and acts more like sarcoptic mites in dogs. It is a short mite

that lives in the keratin layer of the skin, causes a lot of itching, and is contagious with close contact. This is the type we had at SAFE Haven.

Both types of infestation in the cat are diagnosed through skin scrapings. This involves using a surgical blade to scrape the surface of the skin, and evaluating the findings microscopically. Finding either type of mite can be challenging since cats are fastidious groomers. We actually found the mite on only two of the ten cats we scraped.

There are a number of published treatment options. The only one that had a consistently positive outcome was lime sulfur dips done every five to seven days for six dips.

Fortunately, this outbreak stayed well contained and all cats recovered nicely with treatment. In the future, we will be on the lookout for demodecosis in any cats showing signs of hair loss and itching, especially around the face.

A REMINDER TO EVERYONE WHO HANDLES THE CATS

Mange mites and ringworm can have similar symptoms. Any hair loss, especially on the face or head, should be looked at by Dr. Pethick. Please make a point of looking for hair loss or excessive itching when you interact with the cats, and if you find any, report it to one of the staff!

Adoptee Update – Sokrates and Burberry!

Do you remember Sokrates and Burberry? Volunteer Lany McDonald took them home, and writes to tell everyone how well they're doing.

On Palm Sunday this year I fell in love twice. Fortunately, the objects of my affection were two handsome, debonair tuxedo cats – Sokrates and Burberry.

My daughter Puckette came with me to pick them up, and we each carried one kitty out to my car. By the time we were a half-mile down the road, I had decided on new names that I thought would suit them nicely: Sokrates would become Amadeus, and Burberry would become Brahms.

Until these tuxedo twins, I'd only had female cats who lived to be very, very old, and very, very sleepy and sweet. As their vet, Dr. Wages said, I had been running a retirement home for cats for many years. I loved those old ladies dearly until their final moments on earth. Then my house was very quiet and very lonely.

All that changed the moment Amadeus and Brahms came through my door. Suddenly there was more life than this townhouse had ever known! I started them out in one bathroom as instructed. After investigating every inch of the bathroom, they graduated to my bedroom. Amadeus immediately decided that the handmade afghan at the foot of my bed was his. Brahms found his own special place -- the antique pink damask fainting couch in front of the windows.

Because I had overnight guests coming, I decided to keep Amadeus and Brahms in my bedroom/bath wing until all company was gone. Once I opened the doors to the rest (continued on page 4)



Amadeus (Sokrates) enjoying his favorite spot on his human's bed.



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Spotlight On...

Gail Stanislawsky
Thursday Evening Cleaner



Gail has been a part of the Thursday evening cleaning shift since 2003

Gail Stanislawsky had just lost one of her cats, and although she wasn't quite ready to adopt another, she felt the need to be around cats – lots of cats. When her friend Lisa Loiselle invited her to try volunteering at SAFE Haven, she joined her for a Thursday night cleaning shift, and she's been a Thursday night regular ever since.

Gail's major duties on Thursday nights are with the bullpen cats. When the bullpen area in back became the new isolation, she moved up front to the new bullpen. She loves working with the cats – cleaning, handling, playing with them. She has a special affection for the cats who are a little more challenging.

One of her favorite cats was Seville, the orange tabby who was hit by a car and who eventually ended up losing his leg. Seville was in the bullpen for a long time, and she wanted to make sure he was comfortable. When he got moved to one of the rooms and found his best friend, a little gray kitten named Gill, she was thrilled (especially when they got adopted together).

Another one of her special kitties was Sushi, a little girl with a heart murmur. Sushi eventually got adopted by a vet

student who could take good care of her. Gail mentioned that she hoped the vet student picked out a new name – Sushi just didn't seem right for a kitten.

Although Gail has adopted a number of cats, none of them (so far) has come from SHFC. She started out with Delilah and Abigail (Abbe for short), and when Delilah died of cancer in 2001, Abbe needed a playmate. In the fall of 2001 Gail found Hannah and Florah through a friend. Abbe died in 2003, prompting Gail to begin volunteering.

A few years later a big black and white male cat showed up on her deck and made himself at home. Although he was happy to have a constant source of food and water, and he seemed to like her company – he'd sit on the edge of

the deck and talk to her as she sat out there – he wasn't too sure about closer contact.

It was more than six months before he could be touched, and even now he refuses to be picked up, even after some serious petting. He also doesn't want to come inside, so in the winter she puts a tarp over the deck to provide some protection, and provides a doggie igloo and bedding if he wants to hide.

Gail started out calling him Furry (because he's a long-hair), and eventually that became Flurry. Flurry sits on the deck rail and flirts with Flora and Hannah. He's not a fighter, so Gail has high hopes of eventually convincing him that living inside with a self-proclaimed 'cat person' and two cute girls is a great way to live.

Adoptee Update

Continued from page 3

of the house they began to explore the other floors, but would race back to my bedroom at any strange noise.

It's been over two months now and they romp up and down the stairs at will, but still seem most at home in my bedroom—something I am pleased to encourage. Although they may roam and spend much of the night in other rooms, by the time I wake up, Amadeus is sleeping on his afghan at the foot of the bed. On Mother's Day morning, he stretched and came up to me for his first voluntary neck and chin scratching. Now this has become our morning ritual.

Brahms is still a bit skittish. He eats treats out of my hand, but shies away if I try to pet him. He will occasionally sleep on the bed with Amadeus and me, but jumps off if I look like I might move too close to him. As much as I want to give him love and affection, I am respecting his space. I have hopes he will see me as something more than the "treat" lady someday.

Most days we have organized playtime. Brahms goes nuts over "Da Bird." He is quite the acrobat; he leaps like a basketball player and can stand quite tall on his hind legs for long spells. He uses his paws like catchers' mitts and then sits on top of his prey. Amadeus prefers "Cat Dancer." He starts out batting gently, then grabs it with one paw, puts it in his mouth and bites the heck out of it. They also have a number of squeaky toys that I always seem to step on when I get up in the middle of the night.



Brahms (Burberry) on his 'fainting couch'.

As you can tell, these two have invaded my home and stolen my heart, and I love it! They have their best years ahead of them, but I'm already planning for them to stay with me until they are very old gentlemen cats. Then I'll be running my cat retirement home once again. In the meantime, my home is Amadeus and Brahms's rock 'n roll playground.