



CAT ANGEL NETWORK

Together, we CAN make a difference!



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Cats & Babies? Dispelling the Myths By Kirsten Werner, Volunteer

For those of us in the rescue community, it's heartbreaking to hear of a devoted cat being turned over to a shelter or, worse, put to sleep simply because a new baby is on the way.

Many myths persist about the "dangers" cats pose to infants, such as suffocating. Additionally, information on a condition known as toxoplasmosis has many women scared about the risks to their unborn children. But all of these issues are easily addressed with a few minor steps, or by doing a little reading to understand the truth behind these myths.

One common myth associated with cats and babies is that a cat will curl up on a sleeping newborn and suffocate the child. While cat lovers know

how much their furry friends love to cuddle up and sleep in warm, snuggly places, suffocation concerns are generally unfounded. By simply installing a screen door on the nursery, or by using crib netting, you can prevent your feline friends from sleeping in the

"Another common myth is that cats 'suck the breath' from babies."

baby's crib. By the time a baby is old enough to roll over on his own, he is not at risk from a snuggly kitty.

New research is emerging that suggests many infant

"suffocations" were likely caused by SIDS, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, rather than a household cat.

Another common myth is that cats "suck the breath" from babies. Perhaps this old-wives-tale got its start from the common tendency among felines to put their noses up to another cat or human and sniff loudly.

Unlike these myths, the risk from toxoplasmosis is real, but easily minimized with a few common-sense steps. Toxoplasmosis is an infection caused by protozoan bacteria and has been known to cause mental retardation in newborns if contracted during pregnancy. The bacteria that causes this condition can be transferred through cat feces,

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URGENT: Malibu Needs a Home!

By Charlotte Jay, President

Malibu is a very special cat and she has a special need. She's about 14 years old and is diabetic, so she needs to have insulin every day. In spite of all that, Malibu is a total lovebug and is a lovely

gray lady (Siamese mix?) who is quite active in spite of the strikes she has against her. She's so frisky, in fact, that the other cats in "her" room know better than to try to

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Mission Statement:

- To prevent the suffering of abandoned cats through rescue, spay/neuter, medical care, shelter, and adoption to approved homes.
- To educate the public about the proper care of cats, the importance of spaying and neutering, and the benefits of adopting shelter cats.
- To operate as a no-kill, all-volunteer, non-profit organization.

Cats and Babies: Dispelling the Myths (continued)

and therefore pregnant women should exercise caution while gardening or changing the litterbox by wearing gloves and a surgical mask, and washing up thoroughly afterwards. (Better yet, have the dad-to-be do the scooping!) Only cats that have ingested raw meat, birds, rodents, or contaminated soil will pass along the bacteria in their feces.

Most long-time cat owners have almost certainly already been exposed to the toxoplasmosis bacteria, which causes symptoms similar to a mild flu in healthy, non-pregnant individuals. Women who plan on becoming pregnant can ask their

doctor for a simple blood test to determine if they've already been exposed to the bacteria and are therefore immune to it.

Keep in mind that toxoplasmosis can also be contracted through handling or consuming raw or partially-cooked meat, so it's best to avoid rare meats during pregnancy.

The Humane Society of the United States has published a pamphlet entitled, "Your Baby & Your Pet" that provides information to help people resolve obstacles with



pets to keep pets in the family for a lifetime. For more information or to receive a copy, visit www.petsforlife.org.

With a few, common-sense precautions, parents-to-be need not fear when it comes to babies and cats happily coexisting. In fact, well-adjusted pets can offer important childhood experiences — just ask any adult who has shared her childhood with a pet! If you or someone you know is expecting a baby, get the facts. Information abounds on the Internet, the local library, and the corner book store. And remember that your kitty was your first "baby!"

5th Annual Cat Concert

By Henry Grabb, Director of Development

The 5th Annual Cat Concert, held March 28th, raised almost \$7,000.00 and left everyone in attendance "feline fine." There were many wonderful moments in this year's concert. Here are some of my favorites. Dr. Vincent Craig played a Joplin rag, while video showed our own cat name here slurping an endless

stream of water from the sink in the infirmary at the shelter. Dr. Rebecca Field sang a soulful rendition of Wind Beneath My Wings, with a video of volunteers at PetSmart showing on the video. My favorite memory of all though was the 4th performance by Fred, The Singing Cat. In his one work day of the year, Fred pro-

vided the best performance of his lifetime, in duet with soprano Dr. Kathryn Chilcote. During each break of her lovely aria, she would point to Fred, who would then let out a plaintive cry. It brought the house down!! Next year's concert is slated for Sunday March 20, at 3 PM. Put it on your Paw Pilot!!!

Special-Needs Cats

By Elaine Richert, Vice-President

When visitors stop in to the DOWNTOWN PETSMART's Adoption Center these days, they are dazzled by the sight of a beautifully decorated cage, resplendent with gold sequins and ruffles! This is our new "Special Needs Cage," the handiwork of dedicated volunteer Sue Weber. Sue spent weeks planning, sewing, and primping over the elaborate and impressive showcase for those cats that come to CAN with minor special needs.

The goal is to draw attention to these cats. Wearing a jeweled collar, each "special kitty" looks as regal as any "Grand Champion" show cat, and that's the way it should be, according to Adoption Coordinator Elaine Richert. "These cats deserve to be admired and fussed over. They're beautiful and highly adoptable! Often their conditions are misunderstood, and the amount of TLC they require is far less than

is commonly thought."

To date, three cats have been adopted through this program. Felix, Tiger De Polo, and Archie all tested positive for FIV, Feline Immunodeficiency

"Often their conditions are misunderstood, and the amount of TLC they require is far less than is commonly thought."

Virus, and are now living in loving homes. FIV positive cats have weakened immune systems but can live long and healthy lives when the normal feline ailments that occur with age are treated proactively. FIV is passed from cat to cat mainly through

the penetrating bites wounds that occur between outdoor cats fighting over mates. That is why the cats that test positive on CAN's FIV test (typically less than ten a year) tend to be unneutered males. Most are sweet, loving cats who exhibit no signs of illness. Since the disease is not passed through the air or casual contact, these cats pose no risk at the Adoption Center and are popular with visitors watching them enjoy typical feline pleasures such as play sessions and belly rubs. Archie went to his new home after just one day as our featured pet!

Please stop in and visit our current "Special Kitty." For questions about his care, or for information on the other Special Needs cats that are available, contact Elaine Richert at 610-327-3969. You'll discover the joys of being loved by a special cat!

Save those Grocery Store Receipts!

By Linda Petro, Treasurer

In 2003, CAN processed your donated grocery store receipts and received 1% cash back, which amounted to \$1,921! Enlist your friends, co-workers, and relatives to save their tapes and mail them to us. They can also be dropped off at the Adoption Center at the Downingtown PETsMART on Route 30.

Genuardi Markets have made changes to their register receipt program, and no longer accept register tapes. However, you can register your Genuardi Savings Card at the store or at escrip.com and direct a percentage of your purchases to be donated to Cat Angel Network. In addition,

by going to escrip.com and registering your debit/credit card, for every purchase you make from one of the merchants listed at escrip.com, a percentage is sent to our organization.

You can also get a new eScrip VISA Platinum card and every purchase



you make using your card counts toward a percentage going to our group at the end of the year – at no cost to you! But wait, there's more! When you use your new eScrip VISA Platinum card for purchases at any of the hundreds of eScrip merchants, the purchases work toward both the merchant and VISA earnings.

Check out escrip.com and see the many other ways you can donate including travel and hotel.

CAN's group escrip.com number is 149032654.

URGENT: Malibu Needs a Home! (continued)

steal her food. She defends her food bowl much as a young mother cat will protect her kittens! She loves other cats but wouldn't be upset at all if she had a home where she was the one-and-only. We at the shelter all love Malibu very much and look forward to her happy greetings each day, but she deserves to spend her golden years in a situation where

she would have more personal attention than is possible in a shelter. She loves being brushed, sitting in your lap, purring into your neck when you hold her, and absolutely adores having conversations! **Please call us at 610-327-6870 to discuss Malibu's future.** She's spayed, tested negative for FIV/FeLV, and current on all required vaccinations.



Can you open your heart and home to Malibu?

Happy Endings - A Note from a Contented CAN Cat

"Dear Aunt Charlotte and Aunt Elaine,

I was sort of ashamed that I threw tantrums when I first arrived at CAN. So I made sure I was on my best behavior when the Smurthwaite family brought me home. I was very quiet in the car and when they took me into "my" bedroom, I walked out of my carrier and checked things out. I didn't growl, hiss, or swipe at all. I didn't even hide. I just walked

around sniffing things. I let my new Meowmmy pet me and I did a lot of purring. I have to admit I was a little nervous, and puffed up my tail now and then, but I was such a good boy! Their other cat, Sapphire, is very curious about me. She stays outside of my bedroom door all the time. Sometimes we chirp back and forth and sometimes I stick my paw under the door. She seems to like this. When Meowmmy opens the door a crack, I touch noses with Sapphire. I'm dying to get out of the

bedroom and check out the rest of the house. I'm starting to meow at the door to let them know I want out of this bedroom, and I want to be with the family. I think I'm going to like my new home. I'm adjusting really fast and there's lots to see and do here! I'll write again soon. Thanks for taking care of me when I was at my worst. You would be proud of me now.

Sincerely,
Smudge, the Banana Cat"

Goodbye...

By Lynn Hammett, Volunteer

The world lost two wonderful people last month but they continue to live on in the many lives that they touched and the souls of the animals they loved. With sadness, we say farewell to Rue Baker (Lurancy) and Bev Dougherty who both recently

lost their fights with cancer. These ladies dedicated their lives to making the world a better place for the helpless. The cats on earth lost two of their strongest advocates but the cats in heaven were there to greet them. We in the rescue community

will remember their kindness and their passion for this work. We continue our work with the knowledge that two more angels are guiding us from above.

Goodbye...

A Lot of Littles

*A lot of littles is a lot,
A thousand beans can fill a pot,
We all can do what one cannot,
A lot of littles is a lot.*

Over the past five years, Cat Angel Network has established a fund-raising pattern that includes our Spring Cat Concert, Happy Holly Spays, Wings Program, and Fall Art Auction. These events help us to meet our financial goals and bring in a conglomerate amount near \$20,000 annually. These funds pay vet bills, help with TNR programs, heat the shelter, and provide a substantial percentage of our operating costs.

As is true with all organizations, we have many established donors who are very generous to our organization. These donors generally choose one or more of these fund-raising efforts as a vehicle for their contributions.

Due to the seasonal nature of our fund raising and the many financial demands of summer, CAN generally begins May with a reasonable nest egg that withers significantly as the

summer heats up.

This year, the Board of Directors has decided that we want to invite ALL of you to be participants in our fund raising efforts! Through our discussion, the idea of the **Lot of Littles Fund Raiser** evolved. This program is designed to allow each person on our mailing list to send something. With donation amounts starting at \$3.00, we feel that a significant percentage of our readers will want to be involved.

If everyone who has not donated in the past 12 months sent \$3.00, we would have enough to spay and neuter 60 additional cats!

Over the past years, the outstanding work that CAN performs has been funded mainly by "a few bigs, and a reasonable number of mediums." Let's get everyone involved! CAN needs your financial support, in ANY amount. You can make a difference with even a small donation. "Beans" add up!

By Henry Grabb, Director of Development

Please fill out this form and mail to CAN:

- \$3 Bean Soup Club
 \$5 Catnip Club
 \$10 Prancing Paws Club
 \$15 Frisky Feline Club
 \$25 All Kittens Great and Small Club
 \$ _____ Other amount

___ Enclosed, please find my contribution.
 I have checked the appropriate box above.

___ I have contributed to CAN in the past 12 months.

___ I cannot contribute at this time, but please continue to send me the CAN newsletter.

___ Please remove me from the CAN mailing list.

___ Please send me ___ CAN brochures that I can pass along to my cat-loving friends.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____