



CAT ANGEL NETWORK



Together, we CAN make a difference!

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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.*

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Why Not Me? A Plea For Our Senior Angels

by Terry Petrofes

Cinder's urgent cries for help painfully pierced my ears and heart. A little black matted-up knot of a thing, her demands to be released from her cage were persistent, increasing in volume and pitch.

"She doesn't get along with others," they told me. "That is, cats or people!"

Monday after Monday I watched Cinder go from her cage to the faucet and back to her cage again, intimidating one and all with a hiss, a swipe, and a bite or two, yowling as she slithered around the room biding her "free" time.

Weeks turned into months and this vicious meanie began to seriously tug at my heart strings. It became excruciating to make her go back in that cage and CLANK the steel door shut in her perplexed little face. After all, none of the other cats in the room were confined to a cage.



"... hmmm . . .," I began to think. "Cinder was somebody's pet for thirteen years," and, "one of the other volunteers did log in the journal several times that Cinder crawled up in her lap," and, "it never hurts to try."

The adoption has been a huge success! Cinder is very happy in her new home and has made herself quite comfortable here. Having been shaved almost naked prior to leaving the shelter, her coat is growing in soft and shiny and she is once again self-grooming. She loves to lie in sunny windows, play with toys, eat wheat grass, all the while following me where I go. The negative behaviors have ceased!

You might wonder why I'm sharing this story. It is certainly not to boast. I am merely using Cinder's happy ending as an example of what a delightful win/win situation adopting a senior cat can be.

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Cat Angel Network Auction Coming Soon!



Mark your calendar today for our upcoming auction on **October 18, 2009**. This year's event is being organized by **For Paws** in collaboration with Cat Angel Network. For Paws is a group of dedicated volunteers who coordinate fundraising events for various animal rescue groups. Our auction in 2007 was run by For Paws (Lucia Still, auction coordinator), and was a great event. We are also most fortunate to have Bud and Annette Smith of **Smith Auction Gallery** running the live

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Wanted: A Family for All Fosters

by Laura Schwartz

So, you've decided to foster. (CONGRATULATIONS and THANK YOU) and things are going well. Kittens are thriving and are ready for adoption, along with their young moms, who are all under 2 years old. You show them off at PetSmart and all the kittens are adopted within a couple of weeks. A couple of months go by and the moms are still with you, still young, still beautiful, still wonderful, and still waiting for their own forever homes.

You've just run into the wall that all rescues face: kittens are cute and will always be adopted, while older cats are often left waiting. These cats need you perhaps even more than kittens do. Without your help as a foster, where would they be? One of the most difficult challenges any rescue faces, apart from the obvious need for funds, is space.

Space, or lack of it, is always the breaking point. It's what stops any rescue from being able to take in 'just one more.' Your help as a foster enables that 'just one more' to be saved from a life on the streets or potential euthanasia at a public shelter facility. Your time spent working with that non-kitten cat, which may include light socializing to polish up manners, or extreme

socializing to turn a not-quite-feral cat into a purring house cat, is invaluable and offers cats one very special gift: time.

Time gives any cat a chance, a chance to feel loved, a chance to gain confidence, and a chance to find that forever home that has eluded them until now. Cat Angel Network's foster homes have helped cats of all ages enjoy that gift of time until that forever home turns up.



Many cats come to CAN at ages from 1 to 15 or more. Some of these cats have been adopted by their foster families who grew attached and couldn't bear to part with them. Still others have settled into life at our Shelter where, sometimes although not often enough, they manage to find homes when potential adopters are looking for a cat with a definitive personality, a certain look, or just that something special which appeals.

Many are still waiting. It boils the blood to hear of cats that are overlooked simply because of their age. Recently, a potential adopter had very specific criteria for the cat she wished to adopt. A cat at our Shelter, that exactly matched all of those criteria, was suggested as a possible choice. The potential adopter, upon learning that this lovely cat is 11 years old, disdained, "But she's too old!" Never mind that the potential adopter herself was in her 70s -- so many years of mutual love and affection could have been gained but will now never be known.

And sometimes there's a story that just pulls at your heartstrings. YumYum was a 20 year old cat whose owner had fallen on difficult times. YumYum was living in a situation where she was in great danger and needed to be rehomed immediately. No rescue was willing to take in a 20 year old cat with little chance of being adopted. So, an appointment was made for YumYum to be euthanized. A CAN foster learned of this situation the day before the scheduled euthanasia and immediately took her in. YumYum lived for two more years in that foster home, enjoying a comfortable, happy life, giving her foster family incredible joy every single day, and died peacefully in her sleep at home at the ripe old age of 22. How do I know YumYum's story? I was her foster mom. And for all the ups and downs that fostering might entail, I'm not ready to give it up. Join me – you'll be making a huge difference in the lives of so many wonderful cats. 🐾

Meet Our Volunteers

This is the first in an ongoing series of profiles of our volunteers. We hope you'll enjoy getting to know fellow cat lovers and that their stories will inspire you to join the ranks of our CAN angels.

KATHY JAMISON loves cats and dogs but for now the cats rule in her home. She and her husband live in West Chester and also have a home near Buffalo, NY. Cats have been a part of Kathy's life for at least 25 years. About 1 ½ years ago, Kathy became involved with CAN the way many of our volunteers do – through adoption of a CAN kitty. After Smoky passed away, followed soon by SandyPaw, Shadow was lonely and mourned his companions. Kathy asked Dr. Brenda Perkins, a CAN supporting vet, for a reference to adopt a kitty and so entered Stormy.

Kathy was impressed with CAN and when she realized that her adoption was brought about through an all volunteer organization, she decided to join the family. After filling out a Volunteer Application, she was contacted and trained to become a "Greeter." She can be found many Saturdays and Sundays volunteering at our weekend adoptathons at the Downingtown PetSmart. Recently, Kathy has trained with the Adoption Team to "send kitties to their new home", a job she finds very rewarding. She says it gives her a great sense of satisfaction to work with a family or individual through the initial

meeting with a special cat, guiding them through the adoption process and then sending the kitty to their forever home.

An Administrative Assistant at Paoli Hospital, Kathy and her husband dream of retiring to their home in New York and doing greyhound rescue. But dogs, notwithstanding, in the Jamison family the cats will always have a special place. Many of us would have a houseful of cats if we could do so practically, and Kathy is no exception. Volunteering at the PetSmart Adoption Centers is the next best thing. Kathy's husband is supportive and knows that her volunteer work with CAN is very important in her life and agrees that the kitties really need her. Recently, another CAN kitty Maia (now Smaia) was added to their family, joining 2-year-old Stormy and Shadow, a 15-year-old Russian Blue look-alike.

Kathy describes her work with CAN as therapy, a sentiment we often hear from our volunteers. You receive so much more than you give in the process of volunteering with Cat Angel Network.

If you would like to become a CAN volunteer, go to our website – www.catangel.org – and fill out a Volunteer Application, or ask a CAN volunteer at the Adoption Center at the Pottstown or Downingtown PetSmart for a paper application. 🐾

Ask “Angel”

Adoptability of Senior Cats



QUESTION: I have a beautiful, loving cat that I adopted as a kitten many years ago. She is now 10 years old. The kids no longer pay any attention to her, and I am so busy with work that I'm beginning to think she would be better off in another home. She is a sweet cat and enjoys sleeping in sunny windows or sitting on laps. I think she would make an older person or couple an ideal companion. Wouldn't she be happier if I surrendered her to Cat Angel Network so she can find another home?



ANSWER: Can I tell you the honest truth, from a cat's point of view? The truth is, NO, she wouldn't be happier. The fantasy most people have is that there are many potential adopters for a friendly senior cat like theirs. They believe that their “nine-year-old-or-older” kitty will soon leave the comforts of the shelter to be taken home by a lovely retired couple who will lavish her with the time and attention she craves.

The reality for a kitty like yours is more likely to be an experience like the following. Upon entering the shelter, she'll go into a cage so she can feel safe until she acclimates. She will probably not want to come out of her carrier so it will be placed in the cage with her. Being in an unfamiliar room, approached by unfamiliar people, and surrounded everywhere by unknown cats, she'll huddle in her carrier, some

cats for days, others for weeks and even months. Most refuse food, requiring days of persistent prompting by the volunteers so they don't succumb to liver damage. The adjustment period can take months, and some, especially former “only cats,” never adjust to a life surrounded by other kitties. Aggression is very common in a cat under such stress, and even the nicest cat can lash out at anyone or anything approaching the sanctity of her cage. As nice as our shelter looks to a visitor, it is a terrifying place to a cat leaving the only home she has ever known.

Once kitty adjusts, she is available for adoption. Here's where that loving older couple puts in an application for her and takes her home, right? Unfortunately, that is not likely. Although your kitty WOULD make a wonderful pet for them, they are most likely to request.... a kitten. At least 90% of the applications we receive are for the youngest kitten possible. Whether it's because adopters don't want to go through the loss of another pet too soon, or they're afraid of vet bills for an older kitty, adopters most often choose kittens, while wonderful older cats wait on the sidelines, passed over again and again.

Sometimes adopters will state that they don't want a kitten, but an “older cat.” Asked specifically what they're looking for, most reply, “Oh, everybody wants kittens so I'm looking for an older cat, somewhere between one and three years -- definitely not older than five.”



The sad reality is that only one or two cats that are nine years old or older get adopted from Cat Angel Network each year. Those days on which a senior kitty goes home are very, very happy days for everyone at CAN.

So, please, please, let your kitty live out her golden years in the comfort of her own home, surrounded by her family and enjoying the simple, familiar rituals that cats love so much. Believe me, she would NOT be happier having to join the ranks of the many, many homeless cats competing for too few homes. That competition leaves senior kitties at a distinct disadvantage, most living out their last years in the shelter, waiting for an adoption application that never comes. May she never be in the position that so many of us are, of watching the shelter door, praying,

“Please, God, may the next person who comes in to adopt not say ‘Too old, too big’ when he looks at me.”



Why Not Me?

(cont'd from page 1)

What makes Cinder so special in so many ways is that she is sixteen, yes, 16 years old! And yes, this comes with potentially more health problems and a few less years to love each other. But what you get in return is an animal that is SO grateful because of what you are doing for them, and the fantastic feeling that comes from that.

Senior cats need a chance. Some of them have been sheltered so long they just quit vying for any attention. They get lost in the daily shuffle. If we could only put ourselves in their shoes.

Kitten season is once again upon us, and another year will turn the page that our old guys and gals will go overlooked to the more desirable, playful, cute and cuddly ones unless we open our hearts, take a risk, and consequently discover what a wealth of love is hiding right before our very eyes waiting for a chance to give back.

The opportunity to foster or adopt a CAN senior is readily available. They are here. They are hoping. And you will be the one who is blessed. 🐾

Lots 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!



We depend on the generosity of many hands to advance the work of our wonderful organization through volunteerism and financial donations. While adoption fees cover some of our expenses, we need additional support to meet the ever-increasing needs of our feline friends. Cat Angel Network strives to address the WHOLE problem of cat overpopulation. From hundreds of adoptions to loving homes each year, to significant relief to overpopulation via our trap, neuter, return (TNR) program, Cat Angel makes a life changing difference for over 1,000 cats each year!

Without Cat Angel Network, cats in our area would have far less of a chance at finding that perfect life and many more than already do would die needlessly. We know you believe in our cause, and trust that you will take this opportunity to add AT LEAST ONE BEAN to our pot! Please know that even that one bean can be part of a vital advocacy for homeless cats in our area!

Our goal is 3,000 "beans" from this campaign to help us raise \$15,000.00.

Please add some beans to our pot! You will be glad you did, and all cats and cat angels will be most grateful!!

Every \$5 donated is one bean.
 A handful of beans (20) is \$100.

Cat Angel Network 2009 "Lots of Littles" Campaign

- I would like to donate _____ beans and have enclosed a check for \$_____
- I would like to donate a handful of beans and have enclosed a check for \$100.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Have you adopted one (or more) cats from Cat Angel Network?

Tell us who!

Please make checks payable to **Cat Angel Network** and mail to:
 Cat Angel Network, P.O. Box 3071, Stowe, PA 19464.

CAN Auction

(cont'd from page 1)

auction. They make bidding fun and easy for the novice auction attendee!

When and where is the event? The date is Sunday, October 18th from 2-5 p.m. The silent auction runs from 2-3 p.m. with the live auction beginning at 3 p.m. The event will be held at the West Chester Senior Center, 530 East Union Street, West Chester (www.wcseniors.org). There is a great map on the senior center website.

Where do I get tickets? The price of admission is \$15 per person, which includes a wonderful assortment of finger foods and refreshments. There are no actual tickets. Just fill out the enclosed form and return it with your check/cash. Your name will be on a list of attendees, so you will only need to check in at the door.

Dress? We suggest "business casual."

What can I do if I cannot attend? A monetary donation would be wonderful. If you would like to contribute a NEW item for the auction, please contact Lucia or Henry.

What type of items are acceptable for the auction? Gift baskets, restaurant gift certificates, jewelry, items of value, and bottles of wine to name a few.

What is the deadline to donate items? The deadline is September 18th. After that date, we may still be able to take exceptionally high quality items that will bring a good price at the auction.

What payment is accepted at the event? Cash and check only. Absolutely no credit cards.

If you have additional questions, please contact:

Lucia Still – awstill@comcast.net
 (or call 610-469-4925)

Henry Grabb - catangelpa@aol.com
 (or call 610-873-0430)

