



CAT TALES

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From the President's Corner

by Donald Turner

As we prepare for our 12th AGM, to convene at 2 p.m. on April 15 at the Atlantic Superstore in Summerside, we look back at what has been another highly successful year for the Cat Action Team.

Several hundred cats passed through our clinics to be spayed/neutered and vaccinated against disease. Even so, approximately 800 feral, free-roaming cats remain on our waiting list.

Fund raising this past year was very, very good, and I wish again to thank all volunteers for their impressive efforts. The Board of Directors worked hard this year to gather the statistics necessary to persuade donors past, present and future, not merely that ours is a worthy cause, but also that their generous donations have been and will continue to be used efficiently and effectively.

At the AGM, we will be electing new members to our Board. Anyone interested in serving on the Board is encouraged to put their name forward by March 23.

Anyone wishing to assist in fund raising can contact me at (902) 394-4581, or email me at donald@dstenterprises.ca.

In February, Susan and I had the pleasure of meeting with Gwen Samms of the Society for the Care and Protection of Animals (SCAPA) in Stephenville, Newfoundland. Gwen traveled to Prince Edward Island with "Trooper," the severely injured cat who attracted world-wide attention after being rescued and brought for treatment to the Atlantic Veterinary College at UPEI.

We were also able to meet Trooper himself at the AVC before he and Gwen returned home to Newfoundland. Trooper is a beautiful cat with a sweet disposition, and now, due to the generosity of those who donated to his travel and medical expenses, he will soon be well enough to be adopted into a loving home.



To read more about Trooper and Gwen, *please turn to page 2 . . .*

The Miraculous Tale of TROOPER

Thanks to extensive coverage in the media and on the internet, many readers will already be familiar with the tale of Trooper the Cat, who was severely injured, perhaps as a result of being hit by a car, and then endured at least eighteen hours helplessly frozen to a driveway in Stephenville Crossing, Newfoundland.



The “miraculous” part of Trooper’s story began on the afternoon of Saturday, February 11, when his plight was finally reported to the Society for the Care and Protection of Animals, a no-kill, no-cage sanctuary in Stephenville. The call was taken by SCAPA Director Gwen Samms. Within minutes, Gwen and another volunteer were on their way.

Gwen has said elsewhere that when she saw how badly the cat was hurt, she fell to her knees crying. Here is what Gwen told *CAT Tales*:

“He hissed at us when we first walked up to him so we placed some food down for him and that was when we realized how bad the situation was.... Both back legs, feet, tail and backside were FROZEN solid into the ice. He couldn't move.... We called to the people to bring buckets of warm water to melt the ice.... It took several large buckets of warm water to free him. We then

wrapped him in a large warm blanket and headed to the vet as fast as we could.”

Trooper was near death. His body temperature was so low that it could not be measured. He had severe frostbite, nerve damage, and multiple pelvic fractures. Against all odds, Trooper clung to life. But his injuries were so severe that the veterinarians in Newfoundland recommended that as soon as his condition stabilized, Trooper should be sent to have surgery at the Atlantic Veterinary College at UPEI.

Gwen and Trooper flew to Charlottetown on Sunday, February 19, but his condition was still so precarious that the AVC veterinarians waited until the following Friday to operate. According to Gwen,

“Trooper's surgery was very successful, his fractures were repaired, but one hind leg, severely damaged from frostbite, had to be amputated. He was a brave strong soul, and his recovery has been remarkable so far. Two days after surgery Trooper was standing a little on his own, with help from the fabulous ICU doctors and nurses. He is eating well, is bright, lively and already wanting to play, only six days after his surgery. He also had to have most of his tail amputated because of the damage from frostbite, but this has not upset him in the least. He is a happy boy with all the love he is getting from everyone. People from all over the world have been sending love and support for this amazingly brave cat.”

Trooper and Gwen finally flew home to Newfoundland on Sunday, March 4. Many people have offered to adopt Trooper, but for the time being he will be fostered in the home of Gwen’s sister, who is a SCAPA shelter volunteer. Gwen says, “We know he will find the most wonderful loving forever home in the near future, where he will live a happy and rewarding life on his brave three legs.”

While in Charlottetown, Gwen met with many other animal lovers, including officers of the Humane Society, the Cat Action Team, and SpayAid. The Comfort Inn in Charlottetown provided her with free accommodations.

Trooper's medical expenses are high, but his story has been so well publicized that donations have been pouring in from as far away as Australia. Hundreds of well wishers have posted messages on the Facebook page, "Troopers for Trooper."

Gwen says, "the volunteers of SCAPA would like to say a special Thank You to everyone who has helped and sent their best loving wishes for Trooper's miraculous recovery. We are so grateful for all the donations our wonderful animal loving friends have sent and continue to send to help pay for Trooper's medical bills. Without this amazing help from everyone, this happy-ever-after miracle could not have happened. Thank you all from the bottom of our cat loving hearts!"

Commentary . . .

Trooper is evidently a young cat, probably only about a year old. Although he was unneutered when found, everyone who has met him says he is tame and friendly. Gwen Samms suspects that if Trooper is a stray, he has been one for only a short time. It is possible that Trooper was deliberately abandoned. Perhaps he sustained his initial injuries by being tossed from a car; or perhaps he was forced out of one car onto the road, and then hit by a second car.

Janice Higgins of the Scaredy Cat Rescue in Newfoundland was outraged to learn that even after Trooper was observed lying immobile in the driveway, he was left unattended overnight. "That cat has the will to live," she said. "He survived all those hours, frozen in a driveway, and we don't know how long he was suffering with his injuries prior to dragging himself [there]. His needs haven't been met by people, I'd say since his birth. He deserves a fighting chance in life. He is in the

predicament he is in because of neglectful, uncaring people."

On PEI, farmers in particular are well aware that many pet cats are dumped in the country, apparently in the mistaken belief that the cat will either join an established feral colony, or somehow manage to fend for itself. But feral cats are more likely to drive a strange cat away than to allow it into their territory. The painful reality is that, as one farmer has remarked on the internet, "most cats dumped off here only live a week or two. Often they are pregnant when dumped and the kits will starve to death after the mom cat is killed by coyotes or racoons or owls."

The tale of Trooper also reminds us that free-ranging cats, even those who manage to find a source of food, remain vulnerable to life-threatening injuries. CAT does what it can to help the few who come to our attention, but all too often, the free-roaming cats we try to rescue must ultimately be euthanised, either because they are too ill or injured to be saved, or because we lack the funds necessary for the medical treatment they require.

So we congratulate Trooper again on beating the odds: At the last possible moment, thanks to Gwen Samms, her colleagues, and donors from around the world, Trooper was rescued and restored to what now promises to be a life filled with the love and care that he, and indeed every companion animal, deserves.



The Tale of ABE

by Marlana Lockhart



In May of 2011 I was looking for another cat to keep my little Dixie company. I contacted a local CAT representative to ask if she knew of a cat in need of a home. She introduced me to Abe, who had been found as a stray in a ditch. We adopted him, and soon he acquired a second name: "Momma's Fat Boy." I wouldn't trade him for the world. He and Dixie are best buds, and my dog Maya loves him too.

Abe sleeps on my chest at night if he catches me before I turn on my side, or he sleeps on the side of my ribs if I'm turned over.

He follows us everywhere we go and even takes baths with me.

I cannot imagine how ANYONE could throw out a cat like my Abe. He's MY boy now!



by Diann Whitlock

Last fall my brother-in-law, who takes care of a colony of free-ranging cats, was walking back to the house after feeding them when he heard faint meowing. After some searching, he found four tiny kittens. Evidently someone had dropped them off in the belief that they would join the resident colony. But the kittens did not look at all well, and my brother-in-law, who turns to me for advice on such matters, asked me to come over immediately.

Within minutes of my arrival, one of the kittens passed away. Another little fellow was unable to walk – his legs appeared to be broken, and he was obviously in great pain. I tried to make him as comfortable as possible, but he died a short time later. The third kitten was very thin. I tried to feed him milk from a bottle but soon he died also (to write this breaks my heart).

The last kitten, who was entirely black except for a few white hairs on her chest, would not stop crying, but at least she was alive, so I wasn't about to give up on her.

We already had six critters at home, but my Dad, who lives next door to us, had just one cat – "Lisa" – who was about 24 years old. I asked Dad if he could take in the surviving kitten and he said yes. Even though the kitten was small enough to fit into the palm of his hand, Dad decided to call her "Black Bear" (he is from New Brunswick where there are actual bears).

Black Bear had so many fleas that her skin was bleeding, so I gave her a warm bath, the first of three. Finally she stopped crying and began to settle down. After a day or so, Lisa, the old cat, decided it was her job to take care of the new arrival: Lisa showed Black Bear

the best, highest places to sleep, and taught her that the bathtub was the best spot in the house, not just for getting a drink of water, but also for playing games. The kitten and the old cat get along so well together that Dad has started to refer to Lisa as “Grandma.”

Bear is now eight months old, but she is still very small and thin. She eats well, and she loves watching the birds at the feeders, but Dad won't let her out because she is so small. When Grandma Lisa goes outdoors, Bear will sit at the window, watching and waiting for her older buddy to reappear. As soon as Lisa is back inside, Bear sniffs her all over to make sure she is okay. Bear has Dad and the old cat for company – and Dad has two buddies to keep him going.



The Tale of BUTTER

by Susan MacNevin

Although this is the tale of Butter, I need to start by telling you about Jo-Jo, a feral cat who made our yard his home for nearly three years. Jo-Jo was a big guy, well over 25 pounds. He was also quite the fighter, frequently returning home with battle wounds. Although it took a while, he eventually came to trust us, even allowing me to stroke him. I fed Jo-Jo every day, and we built a little cat house for him on our patio.

I cried like a baby when Jo-Jo was killed by a truck, especially when the truck driver told us that Jo-Jo had tried to escape at the last minute by turning in the middle of the road to run back toward our yard.

A few months after Jo-Jo was killed, I dreamt that an orange cat would come to us, and that I would call him “Butter.”

Just three days later, an orange cat appeared in the yard. At first he would not let me near him, but I had learned from Jo-Jo to be patient, and every day I left food for the newcomer. In Butter’s case, it was only a couple of weeks until the magical day arrived when Butter let me touch him! And I felt again, as I had with Jo-Jo, how wonderful it is to win the trust of a cat.

These days, Butter comes when I call him. He knows the sound of my van so he meets me at the bottom of the driveway, forcing me to stop there instead of driving up to the house. Butter is friendly to every member of our family, even our three boxers – he loves the dogs and in the summertime he will curl up with them for a nap in the yard. But if a strange person appears, he turns feral again in a moment.

Butter was neutered at a CAT clinic. Here is a picture of him, with the green tattoo in his ear:



In the picture, Butter is recovering in the sink of the bathroom where he always sleeps now when it is too cold for him to stay outside. But most nights, he sleeps in the same little cat house that we built for Jo-Jo.

CONGRATULATIONS

And



Thank you to those who have donated and continue to donate their loose change to the Pennies+ for Paws campaign, which is a part of the Donna Hickox Food Fund. In 2011, you donated over \$2,000 to purchase food for distribution to feral cat colonies supervised by CAT.

Thank you to the Southport Animal Hospital, for sponsoring a Basket Raffle in December to raise funds for CAT and for the PEI Humane Society.

Thank you to ColourBlind Charlottetown for organizing and hosting the "Art for Animals" raffle in December. Prizes included a weekend at Kayla's Cottages in New Glasgow; a six-pack sampler of olive oil donated by Liquid Gold of Charlottetown; and three original paintings by Heather Moore, one of the proprietors of ColourBlind. A portion of the funds raised was used to purchase food for CAT colonies. Heather is planning another raffle to be held in July.

Thank you to Marlene Beaton and her team, who bagged groceries on Saturday, February 4 at the Co-op Food store on Queen Street, to raise \$400 for CAT. Thanks also to the staff at Co-op.

Thank you to the Union of Public Sector Employees (UPSE), which again this year donated \$300 to CAT, as part of its campaign, "UPSE Has a Heart."

SPECIAL CONGRATULATIONS to Joy Tremblay, recipient of the 2011 Dr. Els Animal Champion Award. Joy is a founding member and current President of SpayAid PEI; she is also a founding member of CAT.

Joy was given the award "for the work, effort, and commitment she puts into SpayAid PEI each day and to honour everything she's done to help PEI's stray and feral cat population," according to Lisa Hashie, PEI Humane Society Development Coordinator.

The purpose of the Dr. Els Award is to recognize people or pets that, through their actions, have contributed to animal welfare and have illustrated the human-animal bond. Past recipients are Diane Minick (2009) and Glenda Carver (2010). Both Diane and Glenda are active members of CAT.

Thank you to Regan Murphy, who recently celebrated her 7th birthday and requested, instead of gifts, donations of pet food and toys. The cat food that Regan received was donated to CAT. Regan, the daughter of Cavelle Murphy, is in grade 2 at Central Queens Elementary School.



ATTENTION Volunteers: CAT Needs Your Help!

CAT needs volunteers in Charlottetown and in eastern parts of the Island to trap, transport, and overnight feral cats for our TNR clinics. If you are able to help, please email dianeminick@hotmail.com, or telephone Diane at 566-2012.

