



THE CAT CONNECTION

Fall 2009, Volume 5

North Toronto Cat Rescue

Canadian Registered Charity No. 83607 9673 RR0001

"HOW MANY TIMES CAN A MAN TURN HIS HEAD, PRETENDING HE JUST DOESN'T SEE?" (Bob Dylan)

They are everywhere: In alleys and backyards, under porches and buildings, raiding our garbage cans, preying on rodents, trying to survive against all odds.



Some 9000 years ago, in the early days of agriculture, we befriended and domesticated the wild cat, recognizing the priceless service it offered in controlling the rodent population decimating our grains.

Today's street cats are for the most part abandoned pets and their offspring. Throwaways of uncaring, irresponsible owners, they are left to reproduce randomly and to live short and difficult lives under horrendous conditions. More often than not, they die as they had lived, in agony – hit by cars, slowly starving to death, freezing out in the open during our bitter cold winters, poisoned by humans who view them as mere pests. 9000 years is a long time by any measure, and it is clear that cats are here to stay. So next time you spot one of these cats, don't turn your head, take a moment, blink at her to signal that you are friend, not foe – you may well get a blink back, thus beginning a beautiful friendship. And then you might ask, "What can I do?"

WHAT CAN I DO? All we can ever ask of ourselves is to do what we can. Maybe you can put out a little food for your "colony". Perhaps a modest donation to your favourite rescue organization is more suited to your circumstances. And who knows? You may want to go all out and experience hands on caring for animals through volunteer work at the shelter of your choice.

OUR SHELTER IS THE CAT'S MEOW! Our shelter is a no kill, no cage facility. This means our cats are able to romp and play; they are safe and cared for right up until such time that they find their "forever" homes and humans.

A WORK IN PROGRESS: Around this time last year, we told you that thanks to the support of the Town of Markham we had been given the green light to go ahead and establish a shelter for our fabulous feline friends. We are delighted to report that tremendous progress has already been made. It is thanks to the compassion and generosity of our many donors and volunteers that this community project is well on its way. Through this type of concerted effort we shall achieve our goals!

OUR GOALS: Stated simply, it is our goal to help as many cats and kittens as we can by bringing them in from the cold, literally and figuratively. In addition, we strive to educate and provide support to all those who wish to participate in alleviating the plight of these abandoned kitties.

WE NEED YOUR HELP: All the care provided to our cats is done by volunteers and financed by donors. There is no hired staff, there is no government funding. A shortage in either volunteers or donors is a tremendous hardship for those who remain to ensure that the cats are cared for no matter what. It is the nature of rescue to be a struggle for the rescuer, yet we do not turn our heads away. We need those of you who would like to work shoulder to shoulder with us caring for the animals, fundraising, grant writing or anything else you think you may have to offer; we need funds for housing, food, medications, vet bills, and a variety of pet supplies including toys!

Most importantly, we need forever homes for our kitties. Since we are a no kill facility, a spot only becomes available upon adoption. Vacant Spots are urgently needed if we are to achieve our main goal – getting them off the street, and bringing them into safety. To be part of this worthwhile effort, you can reach us at donna@northtorontocatrescue.com, or at (905) 940-2287 – where no call goes unanswered!

LITTLE DENVER AND COPPER: KITTIES WITH A “TAIL” TO TELL



DENVER is one of a litter of five born to a cat who arrived at the shelter pregnant after having been rescued from the pound. When Denver was five weeks old, it was discovered that he had become blind as a result of a cold complication, and was taken to be seen by a specialist.

THERE IS HOPE FOR DENVER! Denver has been examined by an ophthalmologist, and we have been informed that it is possible for Denver to regain up to 80% of his eyesight. Denver is an adorable little guy, full of beans, who sure could make use of his eyesight for all the activity he so loves to engage in. As you may know, when it comes to specialist care the costs can be prohibitive. We are therefore compelled to make an appeal on Denver’s behalf to those of you who would like to participate in little Denver’s quest to regain his eyesight and his “not so quiet” enjoyment of life.

A NOTE ON KITTENS! Kittens are very delicate and extremely fragile. Denver’s tale is not unique. Out on the streets, most kittens do not survive long enough to become adult cats. At our shelter, caring for kittens accounts for much of our time and resources. In fact, although ALL of our cats are provided with basic veterinary care at the very minimum, it is the kittens that account for the majority of costs incurred at the veterinary clinic.



COPPER is a loving and gentle “gingerboy”, who was abandoned by his owner. Copper is in excellent health despite having been tested positive for FIV. He is neutered, up to date on all his vaccines, and ready for his forever home. If you’ve always wanted a cuddly kitty, then this is your boy!

FIV DOES NOT EQUAL AIDS: Most cats with FIV (Feline Immunodeficiency Virus) are perfectly healthy. They simply have a virus that can slowly weaken their immune system. It can take years before having any noticeable effect. AIDS on the other hand means the immune system has been completely overwhelmed and the cat quickly spirals towards the end of its life. **Most FIV cats NEVER get AIDS.** They live good lives and die naturally from all the usual causes of death that any cat may suffer, including old age!

- The treatment of any of the usual cat ailments in an FIV cat is just **the same as it would be for any other cat**, it just may need a longer course of treatment.
- Cared-for FIV cats invariably **die from exactly the same causes as non-FIV cats.**
- **FIV cats die with the virus, NOT from the virus.**
- Testing a kitten for FIV with the in-house test is a complete **waste of time and money** because results are at best inconclusive.
- **FIV is NOT contagious.** It is present in saliva, and is so short lived, that it is transmitted almost always only via a serious bite.
- **FIV will NOT be transmitted by sharing food bowls and mutual grooming** (this is confused with FeLV, the leukemia virus).
- **FIV cats do NOT have to be kept away from other cats.** The question of mixing FIV and non-FIV cats is more a question of the nature of the cats. Basically, will they have a serious fight? Most cats, once neutered and given regular food and a safe place to live, will not fight. Careful introduction of new ones is all that is needed.
- An FIV cat (that is generally healthy) **should NOT be euthanized because of the FIV.** The *only* reason to end an FIV’s life is if it is suffering too much from other ailments that have proved to be untreatable – just like any other cat. If you are advised to euthanize an FIV cat that is generally healthy, get a second opinion!

“MY CAT’S BREATH SMELLS LIKE CAT FOOD” (Ralph, the Simpsons)



And well it should! The best food for your cat is **good quality cat food** and little else. Because cats are unable to make their own nutrients in the way that humans and even dogs can, they need to get them from their food. This makes homemade cat food a

complicated endeavour indeed, requiring some 40 different supplements to be added. The other side of this coin is the array of substances cats should avoid because they are in some way detrimental to their health, and in some cases even to their lives. As hard as it may be to resist sharing a treat with your kitty when she’s looking up at you wide eyed with anticipation, here are some compelling reasons to do just that:

- **XYLITOL:** Is a low calorie sweetening agent used in chewing gum, candies, baked goods, toothpaste and mouthwash, and even in cooking. It has recently been discovered that **xylitol is lethal to small animals even in very small amounts.** Depending on the animal’s weight, less than half a stick of gum can be lethal. Xylitol causes a rapid and severe drop in blood sugar (hypoglycemia) inducing a state similar to a diabetic coma in as little as 30 minutes. Signs of xylitol toxicity may include one or more of: difficulty in walking or standing, vomiting, seizures, liver failure, internal hemorrhaging and coma. Immediate emergency care is required.
- **HUMAN MEDICATIONS AND SUPPLEMENTS:** **TYLENOL (Acetaminophen)** should never be given to cats because they are unable to break it down into non-toxic waste. It stops the cats' metabolisms from taking up oxygen properly thus resulting in death. **NSAIDs can cause kidney and liver failure, severe stomach bleeding, and finally death in cats and dogs,** therefore, Ibuprofen, Naproxen, Cox-2 inhibitors and even Aspirin are all drugs to avoid. **HUMAN VITAMIN SUPPLEMENTS THAT contain iron can damage the lining of the digestive system and be toxic to the other organs including the liver and kidneys.**
- **FOODS THAT CONTAIN TOXINS:** Caffeinated products (chocolate, coffee, tea) onions, mushrooms, grapes, macadamia nuts, large amounts of liver (can lead to vitamin A toxicity), tomato-potato-and-rhubarb parts, moldy and spoiled food, garbage.
- **FOODS THAT CAUSE MALNUTRITION:** Canned Tuna; baby food (nutritionally deficient and often contains onion powder); raw eggs (can cause biotin deficiency, leading to skin and coat problems, not to mention salmonella); raw fish (can result in vitamin B deficiency causing loss of appetite, seizures and even death); large quantities of salt (can cause electrolyte imbalance); sugary foods (can lead to diabetes and dental problems); table scraps (in general have very low nutritional value and should comprise no more than 10% of your cat’s diet); dog food (in addition to malnutrition, can also cause heart problems).
- **FOODS THAT CAN CAUSE MECHANICAL PROBLEMS:** Bones from fish, poultry or other meats (can cause obstruction or laceration in the digestive system); string and rubber bands (can become trapped in the digestive system); persimmons (can cause intestinal obstruction leading to enteritis); raw yeast dough (can expand and produce gas in the digestive system, causing pain and possible rupture of the stomach or intestines).
- **DAIRY:** cats are lactose intolerant. If you give your cat dairy products, make sure that they are lactose free.
- **CALCIUM MAGNESIUM RATIO:** An imbalance can cause urinary crystals or kidney stones. Do not give foods that are high in only one or the other of either cal/mag.
- **WHAT WERE YOU THINKING? ALCOHOL** (can cause intoxication, coma and death); **TOBACCO** (contains nicotine, affecting the digestive and nervous systems, and can result in rapid heart rate, collapse, coma, and death); **MARIJUANA** (can depress the nervous system, cause vomiting, and changes in heart rate).



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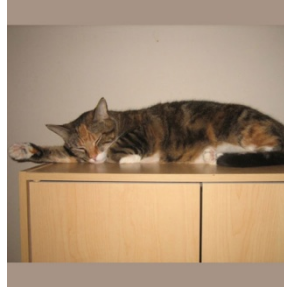
Cats leave paw prints on our hearts

CUTE CUDDLY CALICOS LOOKING FOR FOREVER HOMES



MADGE is a typical calico beauty. She often enjoys looking out the window, watching the world go about its business, while she warms herself in the sun as she naps. Madge is spayed and her vaccines

are all up to date.



MOLLY is a most gorgeous shorthaired calico kitty, who was rescued during a bitter winter. She is extremely shy and needs a quiet home where she can regain confidence. Molly is spayed and is up to date on all her

vaccinations.

To see more of our fabulous felines, please visit our website at www.northtorontocatrescue.com. If you have room in your home as well as in your heart, please contact us at (905) 940-2287 or at donna@northtorontocatrescue.com

Contributions can be made online at www.northtorontocatrescue.com (via CanadaHelps or PayPal), or by mail using the form below. **Canadian Registered Charity** No. 83607 9673 RR0001. Tax receipts are available for contributions of \$20.00 or more.



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28 John Stiver Crescent
Markham, Ontario
L3R 9A8

\$ _____ For food, litter, and veterinary care.

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