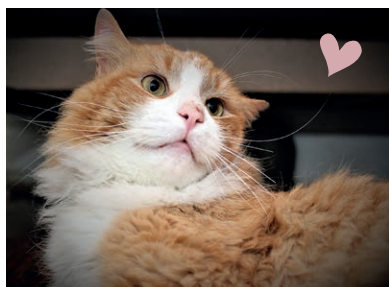


THE CAT CONNECTION

The North Toronto Cat Rescue Newsletter Spring 2020 • Volume 31

UNSEEN THEY SUFFER • UNHEARD THEY CRY • IN AGONY THEY LINGER • IN LONELINESS THEY DIE



A Safe Place to Call Home: Oliver's Story

Having a home, a place that you can live on a permanent basis, is a luxury many people take for granted. With rising real estate prices and stagnating wages amongst the middle class, housing affordability is a topic that's becoming more prominent.

This is how I found Mark Anthony DiBello's article in Reader's Digest, describing what people need to know about homelessness. Uncannily, he seemed to give a voice to Oliver, a sweet, loving kitty found in Markham and a current resident at NTCR.

SURVIVING BECOMES A PRIORITY

Perhaps this goes without saying, but Mark notes that as a homeless person, finding a safe place to sleep was his priority. The same held true for little Oliver. He fended for himself, even as a kitten, wandering around the neighbourhood in search of food for a year. A lady watched him during this time, eventually allowing him to stay in her garage.

A TINY MISTAKE CAN BE FATAL

Like Mark, Oliver found himself close to death when he got into a fight/accident that left him with an open gash on his neck and a damaged leg. The lady with the garage heard moaning and found him in this condition but was unable to take him to a vet due to financial difficulties.

Luckily, she contacted NTCR and once in our care, he was given the medical attention required—an emergency surgery to treat his abscessed wound, antibiotics to stave off infection, and plenty of love and rest while he recuperated. It was heartbreaking to learn that he would have been in excruciating pain and could have succumbed to death in just a matter of days if it weren't for NTCR's quick intervention.



LOOKING HOMELESS IS WORSE THAN BEING HOMELESS

At this point, Oliver's story diverges a bit from Mark's. While Oliver looks as handsome as ever, living on the street has taken a toll on his health. He has contracted leukemia and FIV, both of which are easily manageable but do require some special care, making it that much harder for him to find the right forever home. He will need to go to a household that doesn't have a cat or that has a cat who is FeLV+. And being fed a nutritious diet is that much more important in keeping his immune system healthy.

Regardless, we're happy he now has a safe shelter, any medical conditions can be treated, and he is surrounded by volunteers who love him no matter what. Oliver has survived the streets and is now merely waiting for that special person who will give him a home to live in permanently.



Running a Rescue Amidst a Pandemic

Operating a non-profit, volunteer-run cat rescue is difficult at the best of times. Add to that the fear and uncertainty brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and difficult doesn't even begin to describe the challenges we are facing. But with your help, we will prevail, and dare I say...triumph!

Life inside NTCR is all about protocols that keep both our cats and volunteers healthy. Luckily for us, we have followed the practices of wearing gloves and masks, using hand sanitizer, and minimizing contact between adoption rooms for as long as the shelter has been in operation. We have taken further steps in stopping visitors, limiting volunteers in the shelter, and implementing social distancing. All of these measures will ensure our volunteers and cats remain safe through this pandemic.

What we cannot control however, is the drop in revenue we depend upon to keep our shelter running, as fundraising events are either put on hold or cancelled outright. We remain hopeful that social events that help NTCR raise money and awareness will move forward in the coming months but like everything else associated with the pandemic, there are no guarantees and we must remain flexible to adapt to the rapid changes occurring.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

We are looking to you, our wonderful supporters to continue helping us help our vulnerable cats and kittens. We are asking you to **sponsor a cat** (more information on page 2) or to assist us with **virtual fundraising** (more on page 4) so that we may provide necessary food, shelter, and veterinary care.

In the face of this pandemic, we need to band together more than ever—staying strong for each other and for the cats and kittens that depend upon us for their livelihoods. We want to thank all of you for maintaining your support and look forward to working together in keeping North Toronto Cat Rescue operating so we may continue to rescue abandoned and unwanted cats and kittens for years to come.



Melyssa and Dusty A Tail of "Happily Ever After"



In one word, Melyssa's adoption of Dusty was "AMAZING"

When I saw Dusty's photo on the NTCR website, it was *love at first sight*. Despite having three other cats, I couldn't forget his sweet, grumpy face, and visited his profile 50 times before applying to adopt him.

A feral cat, Dusty had spent four of his six years at the shelter. Very timid and frightened, he would hiss and claw at anyone who came close. I was understandably encouraged to consider other, friendlier cats, but I was already in love. Adopting a feral isn't easy and not for those expecting to bring home a lap cat. They require a lot of extra patience, love, and understanding, and they may still never accept a human touch. My previous feral had lived with me for 11 years without letting me pet him once, but I was prepared to offer Dusty the same kind of forever home where he could take things at his own pace.

JUNE 1ST, 2019: after a heroic battle to get him into his carrier, a frightened & confused Dusty came home with me.

The transition was much easier than I expected! While my other cats immediately warmed up to him, assuming guardian roles, it took three weeks for him to come out from under the couch in daylight. But within five weeks, he discovered that people eat delicious food and following my other cats, he learned to mooch quite effectively. It took longer to teach him to take treats from my hand without using his claws, but after three months of daily lessons (and many scratches), he accepted treats and food without issue.

I fed him beside my chair at the kitchen table to get him used to being near me. Then, while he was distracted, I quietly reached over and petted him, repeating this almost daily until after six months, he let me give him full back and head massages. Provided I didn't move quickly or crouch down too close to him, he let me massage him for up to 10 minutes. I slowly transitioned these sessions to any time during the day. If I spoke softly and squinted at him, he would happily accept the attention, often drooling contentedly.



Dusty has been with us for 10 months and the changes in him have been amazing. He's gone from terrified to confident, strutting around now with his tail in the air. He's still skittish and will run from loud noises and sudden movements, but he comes up to me for pets and even meows when he wants dinner. He loves eating chicken and fish, playing with his laser pointer, and hanging out with his best friend, Ash cat.

Adopting feral cats isn't for everyone. Will they remain untouchable or eventually accept human interaction? In my case, watching a cat like Dusty relax and let his sweet, unique personality emerge has been the most rewarding experience. *I can't imagine our little family without him.*

When Adoption is Not an Option Sponsor a Cat

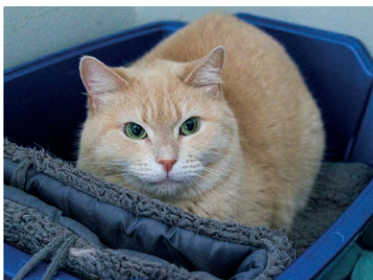
IF YOU WONDER WHETHER YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE, WE PROMISE YOU IT DOES

When you fall in love with one of our cats but just don't have the ability to bring him or her into your home, a great option to support that cat is through monthly sponsorship. Every cat at the shelter is adoptable but some have specific health or behavioural issues that make it hard to find a "fur-ever" home for them. Sponsoring a cat helps us afford all the essentials needed to support him or her, including holistic organic food, veterinary care, and a safe environment to live in.



We have a variety of cats and kittens who are in need of a patron to help care for them. For as little as 82¢ a day or \$25 a month, you can help save a life. In return for your sponsorship, you will receive a thank you package that contains a picture or pictures, a copy of our bi-annual newsletter, and periodic updates to let you know how your sponsored cat(s) are doing. We welcome you to come and visit the shelter by appointment to see how your sponsorship is being used and to meet your sponsored cat(s).

Visit our "Available for Adoptions or Sponsorship" page at <https://www.northtorontocatrescue.com/adopt/rescue-pets/> to see a full biography and photo of our cats. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, please contact us and we will arrange a payment schedule that works best for you. Your name or a dedication name can be added beside the cat(s) that you have sponsored. We have so many wonderful cats and kittens eagerly waiting for you to become their sponsor.



SPONSOR THE SHELTER

North Toronto Cat Rescue is working on our long-term goal of securing a new residence so that we may continue to rescue and rehabilitate cats and kittens who are in desperate need of help. We want to create lasting partnerships with businesses, both big and small, who want to help NTCR achieve that goal.

In return for your generosity, we will use our website, social media outlets, and shelter as a platform for our sponsorship partners. We will provide ad space on both our website and newsletter, branded media posts, as well as add our patron's name to adoption rooms. By becoming our partner, there are many opportunities to develop brand awareness. For more information regarding sponsorship opportunities, please contact us at (905) 940-CATS (2287) or by email at info@northtorontocatrescue.com.

Let's form a partnership that helps save lives!



Welcome to Our Little Family

By Emily and Vincent

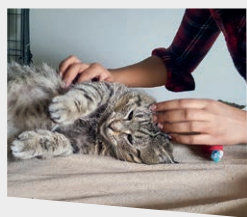


We brought home these two kitties not really knowing what to expect. Would they be affectionate? Would they be independent? What kinds of nooks and crannies would become their favourite napping spots? The first night they were with us didn't leave us with many answers. Harriet was so scared she stayed in her carrier for a good long while, then hiding immediately under the couch for the rest of the night. Oscar (now known as Oscar) ventured around a bit but with wariness in his eyes. It was only when hunger called that we could show them that we were here for them, that *we'll always be there for them from now on.*

Five months later, they have claimed nearly every spot in our home as their own. We love seeing how their personalities differ from each other and reflect a bit of our own personalities as well. Oscar loves to run and jump everywhere, sometimes seemingly without a limit to his energy. Harriet likes to stick to her favourite spots (her cardboard box and the desk chair) but is always quick to join Oscar in exploring new, curious items. We can always count on Oscar to follow us around when he's not napping, and on Harriet to prevent us from falling back asleep after hitting the snooze button on our morning alarms. But they both love getting petted on their foreheads and chin rubs, although they're not too fond of being held. We play a form of fetch with Oscar now, while Harriet can't get enough of playing with her pink foam ball. Even though it's been a relatively short while since they've joined our little family, it's hard to imagine life before the daily cat feedings, constantly having fur on the ground, and these two adorable fuzzballs yawning, stretching, and cuddling the days away.

All It Takes Is Time

Saving cats from a life outdoors is only part of the equation. A critically important aspect of NTCR's goal is the socialization of our cats to each other and to humans. Although some of our cats come in friendly and have few problems interacting with humans, many of our rescues come to us scared, scarred, and never knowing a kind human touch. At NTCR, we use a slow integration process into the shelter to protect our cats from each other and to protect the safety of our volunteers. Our volunteers are trained to work safely with our cats, observing their behaviours and adapting their interactions as needed, to help the cats become less fearful and accustomed to humans, and ultimately comfortable enough to be adopted into their



FOREVER HOME.



Spring Time

Welcome to Kitten Season

April showers and May flowers signify new beginnings, and that includes kitten season. From early spring until late fall, there is an explosion of kittens being born outdoors. This time every year, we become heavily burdened with an influx of pregnant mothers, mothers with kittens, and sadly...orphaned kittens.



We have an increased need for experienced fosters, monetary donations to cover veterinary care costs, as well as volunteers to help keep the shelter clean and germ-free to ensure the health and safety of our vulnerable newborns. Every cat we can take off the street to get spayed or neutered helps stop the cruel cycle of unwanted cats and kittens being born to carve out a difficult and short life in the wild.

"MY HAPPY PLACE"

TAKE OUT YOUR CAMERAS & **GOGO** GET YOUR PET PHOTOS READY!

Our 3rd GoGo Photo Fundraising Contest will **start on June 12, 2020** with 100% of funds raised going directly to the North Toronto Cat Rescue. Whether your pet has fur, feathers, scales, skin, or warts, they all have their "Happy Place!"

By entering this contest, you are:

- proudly showing off your precious and photogenic pet, and
- supporting NTCR by donating to our future!



Your support (and entry!) helps us raise much-needed funds for our mission of protecting, caring for, and providing a temporary home for our current cats and many more that need rescuing.

There are three awesome **prizes for the top 3 photos** (determined by number of votes):

- 1) First Place: 16x20" painting of your photo by artist Sue Naus (retail value \$500)
- 2) Second Place: \$100 Cash or \$100 Pet Valu Gift Card
- 3) Third Place: \$50 Cash or \$50 Pet Valu Gift Card

Visit <https://www.northtorontocatrescue.com/> for all of the details!



(905) 940-CATS (2287)



www.facebook.com/ntcrshelter



www.pinterest.ca/ntcrshelter



@ntcrshelter



www.northtorontocatrescue.com



www.linkedin.com/company/north-toronto-cat-rescue



@NTCRRescue

KEEP IN THE KNOW
BY FOLLOWING US
ON SOCIAL MEDIA!





With almost 200 cats living in our shelter, we go through a lot of supplies! Consider making a gift of cleaning products (vinegar, paper towels, etc.), food, medical care, or other items we need to keep our kitties healthy and happy. For more information about "Our Wishlist Store," please visit <https://www.northtorontocatrescue.com/our-wishlist/>. Every donation counts!

Donate Wishlist Items

Why It Matters

Every cat rescued from the street not only means improving a life but also provides a great benefit to the community. One mating pair of cats has the capability of being the fore-bearers of over 400,000 offspring in a seven-year window!

In our 30 plus years of rescue work, we have saved over 3,000 cats from a life on the street. If we assume that represents 1500 mating pairs, we have potentially stopped 600,000,000 unwanted kittens from being born only to live a short and cruel life. Imagine the devastation that would occur to our wild bird populations alone if this were to go unchecked!

Your support is the bricks and mortar that help build our house. Help us continue to save the lives of our vulnerable feline friends, and be a part of the *House that Love Builds*.



The Search for Volunteers

To say volunteers are the backbone of our charity would be an understatement. We are 100% volunteer-run so without you, there is no us! NTCR is currently looking for volunteers to work with us in the virtual world. We need computer-savvy talent who possess skills in web development, fundraising, media, as well as grant writing and applications.

Keeping our shelter going during this pandemic has been extremely difficult. If you are able to assist us in any way, please contact NTCR at (905) 940-2287 or via our website at <https://www.northtorontocatrescue.com/support-us/volunteer/>. Stay safe everyone!

How You Can Help NTCR

Volunteer with us. NTCR is always on the lookout for helping hands. We need your help to share our message and promote our cause!

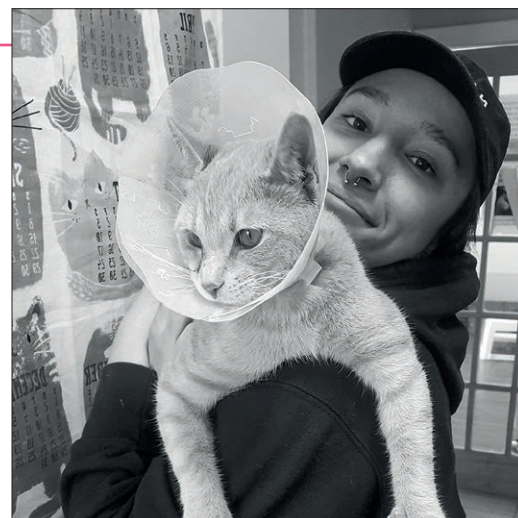
Help us raise funds. This pandemic has put a huge financial burden on NTCR. We are asking our warmhearted community for their support in raising the dollars that will help keep our shelter operating during this difficult time.

Online Donations

- CanadaHelps:
<https://www.canadahelps.org/en/dn/10618>
- PayPal Giving Fund Canada:
<https://www.paypal.com/ca/fundraiser/112574610408097238/charity/3454402>

Virtual Fundraising

It's never been easier to fundraise online, thanks to social media. With so many of our upcoming events being cancelled, NTCR is looking for people who are willing to donate their time, talents, and creativity to help us develop fundraising opportunities in the virtual world. Whether it is an online art auction, virtual music concert, or birthday fundraiser, the possibilities truly are endless. Every little bit adds up and can have a huge impact on helping us attain our financial goals. All ideas and talents are welcome!



North Toronto Cat Rescue Donation Form

Name: _____

Email: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ Prov: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone: _____

Enclosed is my tax deductible gift of : CAD \$ _____*

* A tax receipt can be issued for donations of \$20 and above.
Would you like a tax receipt (check one)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ I'm also interested in volunteering with NTCR.
Please contact me via email or phone.

Please send cheque and completed donation form to:

North Toronto Cat Rescue
28 John Stiver Crescent, Markham, ON L3R 9A8

Note: This is a mailing address only and is not the location of the rescue shelter. Thank you for your support!



Help us decrease printing and postage costs and save the environment by going paperless! Don't worry, you won't miss out on our newsletters and will still receive a digital copy via email. Simply let us know by emailing newsletter@northtorontocatrescue.com. Let's GO GREEN!

