



Mews and Purrs

Volume VI Issue 2

Feral Cat Rescue

December, 2014

Pequeno - A Brave Little Kitten

By Carolyn Jones & Tami Ritchson

In the autumn of 2013, Feral Cat Rescue took in a semi-feral mother cat and her five two week old kittens. Initially, they all seemed quite normal. However, as he grew, it became apparent that the little runt of the litter, called Pequeno, had a problem with his back legs. A trip to the vet revealed that his hips were out of alignment and his knee caps were to the inside of his knees. Surgery could correct these conditions but it would be expensive.



Pequeno

Feral Cat Rescue put out a call for donations and the response was overwhelming. Almost \$1500 was raised to pay for the surgeries, thanks to many generous donors, who shared the belief that this otherwise healthy kitten was worth the effort.

The first surgery, to realign Pequeno's hips, took place in February of 2014. It went well. He was on pain medication for a couple of weeks but that didn't stop him from playing with his brother Grande and getting around the best he could. He was determined to use the litter box and he never missed. He seemed to face and overcome every challenge in keeping up with Grande. When it came time to remove his stitches, a close inspection revealed that he had already removed them according to his own schedule. His incisions healed and his hips functioned as they should.

It was hoped that his knee caps might realign themselves. Alas, this didn't happen. His knee caps were still to the inside of his knees, a condition known as patellar luxation. It was like a taut bowstring, pulling his feet inward when he tried to walk. A second surgery to set his knee caps took place two months after the first, in April.

Once again, the surgery seemed to be successful. This time, however, Pequeno, had to be confined to a 2x4 foot area for two weeks. No jumping, climbing, or running. A small section of his regular living area at the Rescue was set aside for him. His mom and brother, Grande, were close by. Grande found a way to slip into Pequeno's quarters. The two of them were found curled up together, sleeping in Pequeno's bed.

Ten weeks after his surgery, Pequeno was given the ok to move around freely. The bone had healed completely. However, he began favoring his right rear leg and, basically, was moving around on three legs. A check-up and x-ray, revealed that a pin used to stabilize the bone had worked itself loose and his right knee cap was overcorrecting.

Another surgery, in June, re-aligned the ligaments in Pequeno's right leg and removed the offending pin. Once again, his activities were limited.

All limitations were removed in August and Pequeno began building his strength and confidence. His hips tend to roll a little more than other kitties and his jumping skills are not perfect. This hasn't stopped him from getting around. He accepts himself as he is and so do we.

(continued on page 2)

Statistics

TNR: 20

Took In: 20

Adopted: 18

Looking for Homes: 39

Died due to irreversible illness: 3



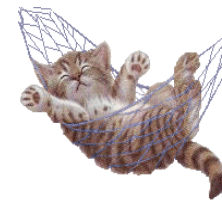
Kitty Kupboard Food Bank

During 2014, 11,130 pounds of cat food were distributed to kitties in need.



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Quarterly Quote:
"If there is one spot of sun spilling onto the floor, a cat will find it and soak it up"

J. A. McIntosh

(from page 1)

The perfect end to this tale will come when Pequeno, his mom and brother, Grande, have all been adopted into homes of their own. Perhaps you can help write this final chapter?

Editors Note: Pequeno's medical bills exceeded original estimates and his fund is still \$287 short. Can you help? Just write Pequeno's name on the memo line on your check and all funds you donate will go toward paying his medical bills.

Husbands and Cats. Here is the second installment in our series.

The Adventures of Dennis and Puff

By Carolyn Jones

As a city kid, I was never around cats. My husband, Dennis, grew up in a small town and his family always had cats. Shortly after we were married, we made a trip to his family home. One day, during our visit, Dennis came in from the barn and handed me a beautiful little ball of fur with big blue eyes. For me it was love at first sight. For Dennis it was the beginning of many years of rescuing Puff.



Puff

Puff was born in a barn but we lived in a tiny Chicago apartment, so he became an indoors only cat. He didn't readily accept this situation and, since we were not used to having a cat around, he escaped, A LOT. Dennis would chase him around the halls of the building, trying to prevent him from getting outside, going into someone else's apartment or being seen by the landlord (no pets allowed).

That summer we took a road trip to California. Puff went along. It was a challenge to be sure he was in his carrier when we stopped. One day, we were eating lunch at a drive-in. Dennis opened the car door and, in a flash, Puff was outside. Poor Dennis, spent some anxious minutes crawling around on the ground coaxing a frightened kitten out from under the car while his wife stood there having a fit. He looked twice before opening the car door after that.

The next year we moved to the suburbs. We had a big yard, but the road in front of the house was a busy one, so Puff remained a house cat and his attempts to change that continued. His enjoyed dashing out the front door and hiding in the spreading juniper bushes. I would go out and spray the garden hose into the bushes while Dennis stood at the edge of them, to catch the escaping wet cat. One January night, with 6 inches of snow on the ground and temperatures below zero, Puff went out the back door and up a tree. Poor Dennis had to go out to the garage, get a ladder, find a place in the snow to set it up and climb it to retrieve a very cold cat from an upper tree limb.

Being a normal cat, Puff was curious. One day Dennis was working with a can of paint in the basement. Puff was, of course, nearby checking on the project. Dennis decided to mix the paint with an attachment to his electric drill. The drill caught the end of the paint can and sent paint flying. We had an unhappy green cat. Dennis put him in the bathtub and proceeded to try to "wash" him off. He eventually succeeded in getting most of the paint off, but not without some bloodshed. He never used the drill to stir paint again.

We eventually moved from Chicago to live in the country. Puff got to spend time outdoors during the last couple of years of his life. By the time we lost him to old age, we had several more cats and a couple of dogs. We've never forgotten our first little furry friend and Dennis told "Puff stories" for years afterwards.

This Issue's Featured Feline

Bubbles

Bubbles is a nine year old Manx cat. She has a shiny, black, short haired coat. She's very affectionate and tidy. Her right ear tip fell off because she was left out in the cold before coming to Feral Cat Rescue. She enjoys each day as she awaits the arrival of her kindred spirit. Could that person be you?



Thanks to Our Donors We could not get along without you!

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 Alan Applebury
 Fox Hollow Animal Project

Memorials & Gifts

Marilynn Taylor, *In memory of Kerstin's beloved 'Cuatro'*
 Marilynn Taylor, *In memory of Chris & Tami's admirable 'Missy'*



Donations listed above were received since January 1, 2014

Wish List

- Loving permanent homes!
- Kitty Kupboard food bank donations
- Kitty beds and towers
- Stamps/postage
- Kirkland Cat Food (for shelter/rescue kitties)
- Feral boxes (10)
- Paper towels

Did You Know..

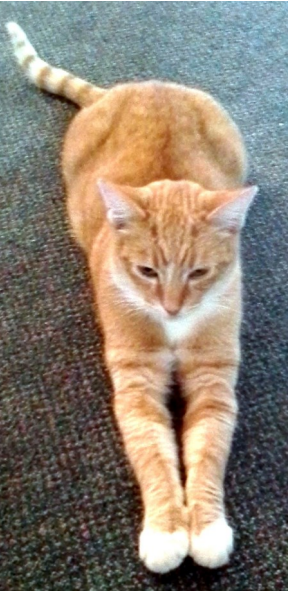
Female cats tend to be right pawed, while male cats are more often left pawed.

A Letter to the Editor

The following letter arrived on the Editor's desk via email. It gives us a cat's view of rescue efforts.

From the desk of Mr...Robert R. Cat:

Let me introduce myself. I am a 10 year old ginger tabby with beautiful white boots. I have a cozy mansion with three human staff. A cook, a butler/doorman, and an ancient treat dispenser. The staff used to be dependable and efficient. Now I must pull hair and smack them to get them to pay attention to me.



Robert, showing off his white boots.

It all began a few months ago. I found a friend who was starving and invited him home for dinner. He never left. My human cook took pity on him and began making special food for his toothless old face. The cook said that he would be a "Foster cat", whatever that means, and he wouldn't be here long. I am beginning to think the cook lies because he has been here far too long.

Recently the cook returned from one of her many hunting trips in the car and my jaw dropped. She had brought one of the most dangerous females in catdom to my castle. A young mother with four kittens! Once again I am told they are "Fosters"! I don't know where the Fosters house is but I wish they would just go home. My cook spends way too much time caring for these transients and the rest of the staff cannot stop playing with the little fur balls. Then they want to touch me! Yuck! I don't think so!

If anyone knows who these Fosters are, please tell them to come and pick up the rest of their family. I do not find them amusing.

Regards,
 Robert R. Cat 🌿🌿🌿🌿

Autumn Activities By Carolyn Jones

Feral Cat Rescue had a busy Autumn.

Several adoption events were held between September and December at feed stores in both Hamilton and Stevensville. These events resulted in forever homes for 7 cats and kittens.

A major food drive for Kitty Kupboard took place on October 18th. Volunteers manned stations outside feed stores, grocery stores and Kmart from Darby to Florence. In addition to collecting 1437 pounds of cat food, it was an opportunity to remind Valley residents of our presence and the work we do both through rescue efforts and Kitty Kupboard.

A great big thank you to everyone, merchants, volunteers, donors and new pet parents for making all of these events a success.

Visit Feral Cat Rescue Online

our website:
www.feralcatrescuemt.org

or on Facebook

www.facebook.com/pages/Feral-Cat-Rescue/27236599048?ref=ts

Be Green and Help Feral Cats

Donate empty ink cartridges to Feral Cat Rescue for recycling. Drop bins are at Willow Mountain Veterinary Hospital, Corvallis. For more information contact Carolyn at 777-5143. Funds from cartridge recycling, pay for printing this newsletter.

A Note From Tami

Due to time constraints, it's been almost a year since FCR's last newsletter came out. When faced with a choice between helping today's kitty in need and telling about yesterday's, we choose today's every time. We hope you understand our decision as you read about the following 'spontaneous' rescue:

From Pauper to Prince in Twenty-five Minutes

By Tami Ritchson



Did You Know..

A cat's brain is biologically more similar to a human brain than a dog's. Both humans and cats have identical regions in their brains that are responsible for emotions.



Frosty

Christi found a wee little kitten in the middle of the road. He was tan and white, and blended well with the snowy dirt road. She almost ran over him. But that wasn't his destiny. After she got him home, warmed and fed, she called me. She thought he might have frostbite on his toes, as there were some signs of damage. She also had her quota of kitties, so didn't want to keep him.

In deciding where to meet her, it dawned on me that Valley Pet Clinic was as good a place as any. It seemed we needed a vet's opinion about those little toes, so I went in, unannounced, and asked if Dr. Joe had time to see this little guy. Well, they were already over-booked, but if the kitten needed to be seen that day, they would make it happen.

As I held the little kitty, Dr. Joe came from the back room, eyes softening. In the exam room, we found the toes were a healthy pink, although some fur was missing. It was something to keep an eye on. As he continued the examination - ears, temperature, etc. - he told us how Oliver, the big wonderful Lynx Point Siamese, who has been the Clinic cat for years, had just passed away, due to cancer. Oliver, too, had been found in the middle of the road. He then asked if we would like to leave the little kitty with him, and it could become the new clinic kitty.

His assistant, Shelby's face lit up, and as Chris and I walked through the reception room, with an empty carrier, Shelby carried the little kitten out from the exam room. All the receptionists' faces lit up too as they learned they had a new adorable, rescued kitten. They named him Frosty.

As most of you know, animal rescue is a labor of love. We don't know how this kitten found himself in the middle of the road, cold, wet, and alone. But the people he encountered from that point forward showed us that, underneath the busy-ness of our culture, the moral progress of our nation quietly continues.

"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.. I hold that, the more helpless a creature, the more entitled it is to protection by man from the cruelty of man"

-- Mahatma Gandhi (1869 - 1948)

Bobbie's Story as told to Kari McNinch

I'm Bobbie. I'm just a young feline girl, but my story is like that of so many other kitties.



Bobbie

When I was a kitten I lived in a nice warm house. I trusted and loved people. I don't know why, but when I was a year old I was sent to fend for myself, outside, in a frightening world. A few weeks later I gave birth to six tiny babies.

It was cold and rainy and the shelter I found was small. That was good because it held my body heat and kept my kittens warm. I had never been so tired but I had to stay alert to any danger that might be lurking. I heard coyotes yapping, and knew I would have to find a safer place but for now we needed to rest. Over the next few days the rain subsided but the cold stayed.

Hunger drove me to leave my nest for a while but I didn't go far. I heard a mouse in the grass nearby. My milk was running low and I knew I must eat to feed my babies. Stretching my sore stiff body, I wandered down to the nearby stream for a drink. Frost tinkled down on me as I wove my way through the grass. There, by the stream, in the dry leaves, I heard the rustling again. A quick pounce and I had dinner.

When I returned to my nest, I detected a strange, maybe dangerous, smell. I had the feeling we needed to move. But where to go? There were houses in this neighborhood but could I trust the people?

I looked for a safer spot to put my babies and found a woodpile that might work. My kittens were crying and hungry but I needed to move them quickly. The scent of a strange dog was palpable. I lifted the first kitten and began trotting across a yard. A dog barked. I froze. My fur twitched in fear. I turned and ran in the other direction. When I felt safer, I stopped to get my bearings. My kitten hung from my mouth. I searched for a place to put her while I looked for a safer route to our new nest. It is hard to run with a kitten in your mouth and I made a mistake by not staying close to the fence and tall grass. I put her down by a fence post and raced for other kittens.

Frightened eyes peered at me when I arrived at the nest. I licked my babies quickly and was off with another kitten in my mouth. This time I stayed near the fence. Four more trips and I had all my kittens by the post. We were halfway there. One of my babies was having trouble breathing. The damp, cold air was too much for her little body. I had to find a dry warm place for them.

Hushing them, I made my way closer to the wood pile. Here there was an old rusting metal box. It looked cozy and dry, and the human smell that lingered was old and faded. Returning to my kittens, who were huddled in a little ball to keep warm. I carefully moved four of my darlings to the metal box.

In the light of dawn, I could see that my smallest had quit breathing. I laid with her by the fence post licking her still body, keeping her warm and hoping that she would stir. The only movement I felt was my last kitten purring for milk. My milk was heavy in my breasts and I knew the other kittens were hungry, so I picked up my remaining baby and sprinted for the new nest.

Suddenly, a door slammed! A dog barked! I ran quickly across the yard. The kitten I was carrying got tangled in my front legs. I fell, dropping her. I scrambled to my feet looking for my kitten. The roar of a car engine told me I must move, and fast! I would go back later to find her. I ran the rest of the way to the nest, dizzy and weak from lack of food and exertion.

Only four of my children made it to the new nest. They were hungry. I had to feed them before I went back out to look for the little girl I had dropped. I listened for her cries but heard only humans bustling around in the yard. She was gone. (Continued on P. 7)

Need a program for your next social or business organization meeting? We have one your members might enjoy.



Volunteer Opportunities

Feral Cat Rescue needs volunteers who can work independently as:

- ⇒ Digital video editor
- ⇒ ABS feral cat recovery box builder
- ⇒ Proactive foster homes
- ⇒ TNR trap setup and check, transport to spay/neuter
- ⇒ Fundraising and food drive organizers

(continued from P. 6)

The next day I had to find food. I was weak and shaky and had little milk left for my babies. I set out through the long grasses to the stream and beyond. Then I heard a human close to where my kittens were. Alarmed, I quickly returned to the nest! A strong human scent clung to the grass, growing stronger as I neared the nest. My worst fears were realized when I saw the front of the box that held my nest was pulled open and my children were gone! I wandered around in a daze crying out for my kittens in the hope that I could find them. Hiding by the fence I watched as cars rumbled in and humans walked to and fro calling out. A wire crate was plopped down with the mouth watering smell of food emanating from it! I remembered that smell from long ago and crept closer.

A woman came, sat in the wet grass and spoke when she saw me. She looked kind. I wanted to go to her and feel her hand stroke my fur. I spoke to her and asked if she could help me. She seemed to understand and another kind lady, standing a few feet away, went to the nearest house and returned with one of my kittens! Oh joy! My tail was twitching with some trepidation but I had to trust these ladies. The hand that greeted me seemed to understand. It didn't move as I smelled it all over. When I signaled that I was ready with a small rub, it began to caress my fur. This would be my forever mommy.

Soon, I was reunited with my four kittens in a warm and cozy home with plenty of food and safety. Between bites of delicious chow I rubbed and thanked the kind ladies who rescued me and my kittens. Then I slept for a very long time.

Editor's Note: The missing kitten was found by a kind man and his dog. He took her home, bottle fed her and she is now part of his family.

Oh Christmas Tree! By foster mom, Kari McNinch

Not long ago I volunteered to foster a mother cat and her four kittens. OH boy! It's been a long time since I've had kittens, puppies, or children for that matter.

When they first arrived I put them in one room in a special cage. That didn't last long. Whenever I opened the cage door, they would flood out in a wave of fur, climbing, frolicking and being way too cute. Eventually they had the run of the house, ostensibly to socialize them, but really, I just wanted to laugh at their antics and share their cuteness with everyone. I found them to be excellent at defoliating my plants!

Whenever a can was opened, a kitty carpet would appear at my feet! Upon coming home from shopping I was greeted by a chorus, heralding my return.

After spaying and neutering they went on field trips to greet people who might want to adopt a fuzzy family member.

My husband asked when we would put up our Christmas tree. We usually set it up right after Thanksgiving. I was delaying it this year. I knew it would be the BEST cat toy ever devised to be put in a house! I was right. As soon as the tree was standing, trembling and nude of ornaments, it was decorated by multiple colored fur balls with an orange tabby topper! Then, to the cats delight, we tried to put plastic balls on the branches! Oh my, what fun!

The last kitten has found his forever home. It was a little extra work but I would do it all over again for all the joy they brought me while they were here.

My husband told me that fostering was dangerous because of the risk of falling in love. He doesn't get to meet the wonderful families who adopt them. I do, and that makes me feel better. It was harder on him when they left.

I have that "empty nest" feeling and my Christmas tree looks worse than Charlie Brown's, but, it was worth it.



A group of cats is called a "clowder".

Did You Know..

Cats can make about one hundred different sounds. Dogs make about ten.



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About Feral Cat Rescue

Feral Cat Rescue is dedicated to the humane treatment of feral and stray cats. Through TNR, education, spay/neuter, foster care and adoption, our goal is to end the needless suffering and killing of unwanted and abandoned felines.

FCR was founded in 2007 as an unincorporated non-profit organization. We received our 501C-3 status as a non-profit organization in 2010.

All donations are tax deductible. Please make checks payable to Feral Cat Rescue.

Every Cat a Wanted Cat.



How To Contact Feral Cat Rescue

By Mail:

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Hamilton, MT 59840

By Phone:

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