



April 2008  
10<sup>th</sup> EDITION

# The *pet chat!*

## Mississauga Humane Society Newsletter

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### MISSION STATEMENT

To rescue as many homeless companion animals as possible, and find them FOREVER HOMES.



*Fluff*



*Mystic*

### President's Message

Have you ever wondered how we operate without an office, a shelter or paid staff? Well, it all starts with the main phone line, our main connection with the public, besides the website.

Our main line is basically an answering machine that records incoming calls; the messages are retrieved by us several times daily. On an average day, we pick up 15-30 messages!

The most common calls are those from owners wanting to give up their pet; there are always a couple of these calls everyday, if not more. Then there are those who report about stray cats. There are a lot of these calls during spring and summer, the 'kitten' seasons. Just one call can involve 5 or 6 stray cats! Many people mistake us as the City Animal Services and call about a missing pet, an injured squirrel, getting a pet licence ..

Some pet owners call for our advice, such as when they should neuter/spay their pet, or where to get a good-priced vet.

There are also calls from potential adoptors for information on a particular pet (although it is stated on the site that they should contact the foster parent directly!), and also from adoptors of our pets like "I have not received the papers of the cat yet..." (and they just adopted it the day before!) Once in a while we get a call from a school requesting us to send a volunteer to give a speech on Animal Care to their students.

What kind of callers we love most? Those who want to donate money, and those who want to foster a pet, are a tide! Our favourite 'messages'? The '*hang-ups!*'

The calls are looked after 7 days a week by two dedicated volunteers, who are very knowledgeable in and experienced with the MHS and animal rescue work. **All calls are returned within 24 hours.** One some days the time spent can take up to 4 hours! It is a frustrating yet rewarding job - knowing the calls for help of animals in need will never stop, yet we are able to help some of them. We can never save all of them; we do our best to save as many as we can with our resources.

And then, of course, there are the emails of the same nature!

*Lily Chan, President*

### Board of Directors

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EDITOR: LILY CHAN

# RESCUE & ADOPTION STATISTICS

*(January to March 2008)*



*Coltraine*  
**ADOPTED**

Number of Dogs Rescued 29  
Number of Dogs Adopted 18

Number of Cats Rescued 83  
Number of Cats Adopted 103



*Pounce*  
**ADOPTED**



## Home SWEET Home

*"Some of our adopted pets in their loving forever homes."*



*Dundas*



*Sasha (Ajax)*



*Abbey*



*Lnoie*



*Mila*



*Ruby*

*Turbo*



*Carla & Casha*



# CAT CORNER

## PREVENTING a Cat-astrophe

By Tina Kendall

When you add a cat into your household, you are adding a new member of the family. As with any member of the family, you should be concerned with the health and welfare of your pet. Much like a new baby your cat depends upon you to realize when attention is required and to act accordingly. Often, people are hesitant to take their cat to the vet. Veterinarian care costs a considerable amount of out of pocket cash. Financial concerns alone are probably the outstanding reason that so many owners end up ignoring symptoms, avoiding vets, and even abandoning the animal to die on its own. So – what can be done to assure the best possible care for cat [and owner]?

Choose an experienced veterinarian. While most people expect that every vet will be concerned with their pet and will act out of compassion, the reality is that vets, like all professions and people, vary. There is no rule that will allow the pet owner to determine which is which but an experienced vet will be able to diagnose your pet's illness in the shortest amount of time with the least number of tests possible. Tests cost money and are, in themselves, only indicators of what is wrong. The vet's interpretation is what is most crucial. Talk to as many other cat owners as possible before settling on a veterinarian.

Don't listen to the myths of the fear mongers. Every illness need not be a major one. Feline Leukemia or Feline Aids do exist but only in about five percent of cats. Fears of toxoplasmosis being transmitted to pregnant women often lead the owners to give up their pets. The occurrence of toxoplasmosis in cats is even lower than that of FIV and Feline Leukemia.

Kittens are exceptions. "Baby" cats often can die from ailments that an older cat can survive. When considering whether or not a condition is serious, remember that a kitten is always an exception – and vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy and lack of appetite require immediate intervention when the pet is a kitten.

Educate yourself! By being informed, you can know when a change of diet will be all that is needed and when an emergency clinic visit is called for. Catching a problem early is good for the cat and your pocket book. Here are some common concerns that should be recognized:



**Michou  
ADOPTED**

1. Failure to use the litter box. Urinating on the floor or inappropriate places may mean that you have a non-neutered male or a minor infection. If it is a minor infection, a vet visit is necessary but the cost should be low. Poor litter box placement or hygiene may also be at fault. If your cat, especially if he is a male, strains to urinate or passes blood, this requires immediate attention.
2. Diarrhea. This can be caused by a number of factors but the first is the animal's diet. Some cats can tolerate milk but many cannot. Remove the milk from the diet before visiting the vet. Worms and other parasites may also be the cause. An outside cat will always get worms, so deworm him and keep him indoors.
3. Vomiting. If this is infrequent or if the vomit has chunks of food in it, then there is little need for concern. Vomiting is only serious if it continues regularly for a period of days or if it is a kitten that is involved.
4. Drooling and Foul Smelling Mouth. This is always a reason to visit the vet but is often something that can be cleared up cheaply by medication.
5. Runny Eyes. Clear liquid running from the eyes for a day or two is of no concern but if it continues and the eye starts to close – a trip to the vet is required.
6. Scratching. If your cat scratches their ears or shakes their head continually, then mites might be involved. This is usually resolved in a one-time application of the appropriate medication.
7. Weight loss. If the cat is eating and losing weight, a vet visit is necessary to determine the cause, but the prognosis is not necessarily poor.

Finally, read books, talk to your vet, and look at scientific and scholarly sites on line. Be aware that commercial sites, like pet food manufacturers, are really there to sell you their product first. In taking any advice, consider the source. Be wary of advice that comes from the staff of pet stores, Remember: commercial concerns need to cut costs and to make sales to stay afloat. Often they will attempt to tell you what you want to get your dollars to get your dollars to help them do so.



*"The dog is a gentleman. I hope to go to his heaven, not man's" - Mark Twain*



# Puppy LOVE Story

## *BARRY BEAR finds his FOREVER HOME*

By Lyn Vallillee

I was devastated when we had to have our beloved yellow lab, Duffy, put to sleep just two days after Christmas in 2005. His cardiologist and internist had worked miracles over the last year and kept Duffy going on a cocktail of drugs that helped his heart to function, and gave him a very good quality of life considering his heart's condition. It was an extra year that we would not have otherwise had.

Duffy's absence left a huge hole in my heart and I missed him terribly. There is something about the presence of a large breed dog in the house that cannot be replaced by time. After six months without "mommy's boy", I knew I had to add have another big dog in my life. And so the search was on...

My daughter encouraged me to go online and read the biographies of the dogs that needed homes. As most of you have experienced, I wanted to bring each and every one of those babies home. Once I settled down and began to get specific about the special dog that would fit into our home and lifestyle, the list got shorter.



After searching for a few weeks on most of the websites in the Toronto area, I came across the picture of a large dog that caught my attention. There he was, sitting in the snow with his big amber eyes, large floppy ears and "that look". I called the MHS immediately and learned that Butler had recently been rescued from a pound Bancroft, ONT. He had been tied up for seven years and just wanted love and a cozy bed, inside. Janice and Mike were Butler's foster parents and said they would bring him to my home in Burlington for a "meet and greet". He bounced out their car and he just seemed to know his life was heading in a wonderful new direction. I could see that Butler was going to need much attention, reassurance and love to be confident. I

was up to the challenge, and a week later, Butler had moved in for a two-week trial period. Well, there was no way that I would have ever given this precious boy back. He was in his **FOREVER home**.

We have renamed him Barry Bear. It has been almost two years since Barry Bear arrived. **We just love him so much.** I needed him as much as he needed me. It took several months of stroking (literally and figuratively) to see the changes. He had to learn how to play with toys, walk on a leash and come when called. He was not used to being cuddled and held, but now he is a big mush ball and loves to be hugged and kissed. He especially loves it when mommy whispers sweet things into his ear and kisses his toes. Bear is so very clever and I just know he understands all the baby talk he hears from me. Janice and Mike did a great job-integrating Bear into household life, which made my job much easier. He loves our daily 3 km walks, sleeps in mommy's bed (with Teddy, his brother, our 11 yr old pug) and enjoys all the nutritious food he had missed for so many years. He has accomplished all these things and much more. Since my husband is away from home quite a bit, Bear has turned into a great watchdog, even better than our alarm system! I am not the least bit nervous to be alone in the house with Bear there to keep an eye on things. He is so smart and has a wonderful temperament. Mission accomplished, and I can now proudly say that Bear has really blossomed into a trusting and affectionate dog!

***Thank you to all the people involved in the rescue work. These beautiful dogs rescue us in every way that we rescue them.***



# RESCUE STORY

## **HOBBLER the 'deformed' TROOPER**

By Lily Chan



It was a chilly morning in October, Hobbles and a few young cats were spotted on the lawn of a house. They appeared to be hungry and looking for food. Hobbles looked very different from the others. She was dragging her hind end on the ground. The lady who found these strays was worried that, with her handicap, this poor kitty would not survive when the winter comes. She contacted us for help.

The next day, Tina our Cat Lady (or should I call her *Mother Teresa of Mississauga stray cats?*) went to the location and humanely trapped Hobbles and her siblings. All were taken to our veterinarian Dr Wendy Hessing for a check up and the regular procedures of vaccines, neuter/spay etc. Hobbles was guessed to be around 6 months old. She had many sores on her hind legs and infections, most likely due to her dragging them on the ground all the time. The infections were treated. A thorough examination and X-rays revealed a very sad story. One of her hind legs was a deformity by birth. This leg had no joint and it stuck out straight and could not bend. It was thought that her other hind leg was most likely normal until she was shot with a BB gun - **a BB pellet was found in her spine!**



The pellet probably had caused nerve damage that made her other hind leg awkward. The worst part is that the damage also caused her to lose control of her bowel and bladder movements. She also had very bad diarrhea which took a long time to clear up, most likely due to malnutrition, being a stray eating whatever was available.

The option to put her down was considered, but eventually Hobbles' great spirit and personality won over. It is obvious that she has the WILL to LIVE, and that she thinks she is no different from any other cat! Everyone at the clinic likes her and comments that what a brave fighter this sweetheart is. Hobbles were taken to a specialist to find out if anything could be done about the nerve issue. The expert advice was that the pellet should not be removed, as it will not change her present condition. After the visit to the specialist, Dr Hessing decided to amputate Hobbles' deformed leg and her tail. In that case, she wouldn't be dragged down by the weight of the useless limb and the tail. It would also allow her the possibility of walking on 3 legs without scraping herself along the ground.

The surgery was done and we did all could possibly be done to improve her quality of life. We also spayed her. We realized Hobbles would never walk like a normal cat, nor can she control her bladder and bowel movements. Knowing that we can never find a home for her, compassionate Dr Hessing kindly offered to keep Hobbles at her clinic as a mascot, as she did with several of our unadoptable cats (which can make a few more rescue stories!).

It has been more than 6 months since we rescued Hobbles. She has settled in nicely at the clinic. She definitely is a little fighter with a great personality! She 'walks' around the clinic using her 2 front legs and the right ankle of the hind limb. She loves her treats, and would 'run' for them at the feeding time! She would crazily race to catch the 'shadow dot' when the laser pen was turned on. She gets along with the other clinic cats. Tommy, whom she sometimes bosses around, is her buddy! Taking a nap on the hammock is one of her favourite pastimes. She also imitates the other cats and try to use the litter box (she actually shovels the litter!); although she cannot really 'do her job' there due to her handicap! She pees and poops anywhere, as she needs to go. She still "dribbles" when she is picked up. As her ankle would get sores easily due to the dragging, bandages have to be changed frequently. Thanks to the kindness and patience of the staff at Dixie Animal Hospital, everyone chips in to clean up Hobbles' 'daily messes'! ***I cannot imagine the harsh life of Hobbles before our rescue, but this is the past. Hobbles now has a new life, and I know we could never find a better place for her than the DIXIE HOME!***

# Kitty LOVE Story

## *RASCAL, a rascal? Not any more!*

by Samia Malik



Rascal became a part of my family in the summer of 2006. I had just moved to Toronto, found out about the Mississauga Humane Society through the Internet and contacted Lily. I was intrigued by the foster-parent program and initially tried to keep two cats in my tiny basement apartment. Lily was kind enough to let me foster Rascal - a beautiful 2-year-old brown (though he is white and grey!) tabby cat – and Rambo – a feisty, energetic brown tabby cat. It was a pleasure to have them both initially, but Rascal and Rambo often had swatting matches. Eventually Rambo had to move out, and it was then that Rascal began to settle down in his then temporary home.



It so happened that I soon had to move from Mississauga to Scarborough. Lily suggested that I adopt Rascal. Rascal was still very shy, sometimes biting and often clawing, refusing to be pet for very long. Adopting a cat is a very important responsibility and though I was not sure initially, Rascal and I did end up moving into our new apartment in Scarborough.

Rascal took time settling down, initially not wanting to be touched for grooming or petting. I thought that if I had a kitten, it would be more loving and so contacted Lily to say that things were not 'working out' with Rascal. Thank God for Lily's response! She advised me to **take a little more time with my cat.**

Months passed by and as I settled down with my new job and university, little by little I noticed Rascal getting affectionate. He would greet me at the door everyday I would come home, sleep at the foot of my bed at night and just jump and settle down on an ottoman whenever I was watching TV.



The months with Rascal have now turned into two years and I cannot imagine my home complete without Rascal in it. In return to my little care and attention; he has given back so much love. Now Rascal jumps onto my lap, sleeps right next to me and loves to lie on his back for a 'tummy rub' every morning!

It just goes to show that with just a little time and affection, animals give back so much. I am truly grateful to the Mississauga Human Society for the chance to have such a wonderful friend and companion for life!

🐾 **"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated"** - Mahatma Gandhi 🐾

# ANIMAL KINGDOM

## ►An Eye on You

Cashew, my 14-year-old yellow Lab, is blind and deaf. Her best friend is Libby, 7, her seeing-eye cat. Libby steers Cashew away from obstacles and leads her to her food. Every night she sleeps next to her. The only time they're apart is when we take Cashew out for a walk. Without this cat, we know Cashew would be lost and very, very lonely indeed. It's amazing but true: This is one animal who knows what needs to be done and does it day in and day out for her friend.

TERRY BURNS,  
Middieburg, Pennsylvania



Cashew, my 14 yr old Yellow Lab, is blind and deaf. Her best friend is Libby, 7, her seeing-eye cat. Libby steers Cashew away from obstacles and leads her to her food. Every night she sleeps next to her. The only time they are apart is when we take Cashew out for a walk. Without this cat, we know Cashew would be lost and very, very lonely indeed. Its' amazing but true: This is one animal who knows what needs to be done and does it day in and ay out for her friend. - Terry Burns

An abandoned piglet who has found love and a new chance of survival with a litter of dachshund puppies and their loving mom, Tink



# HUMOUR TIME



*How you act disgusted when I lick myself. Look, we both know the truth. You're just jealous!*

*I think I still need one more... or two...*

# STEPS OF COMPASSION

## *A little Pepper Gave Me a Jolt*



“One day, while I was cooking a chicken and petting my boyfriend’s dog, Pepper, a small terrier, I had an epiphany. As I was stroking Pepper’s fur, I realized that he was about the same size as the chicken in the oven. His little leg resembled a chicken’s thigh. It hit me: ***I wasn’t cooking meat. I was cooking a small animal.*** I wondered: “If Pepper had lived in another country, would he have been someone’s dinner?” I felt physically ill and began to cry uncontrollably, I haven’t eaten meat since then, and I never will.

Pepper always looked at me like he was trying to tell me something. Perhaps he was trying to make me understand that animals are not food, they are beautiful beings who deserve to live. Animals can’t speak in words that humans can understand, but they have a lot to teach us if we pay attention.” – *Dina Bruno*

- Excerpt from *AnimalTimes*, a PETA magazine  
Visit: <http://www.peta.org>

### HELP ANIMALS in 15 MINUTES

#### **Offer to walk a neighbour’s dog**

if you have noticed that he or she is always tied up outdoors or left alone throughout the day. Make sure the dog has food, fresh water and toys. Encourage all your neighbours to have their animals spayed or neutered.



## Thank you

***Thank you to all of the people who contributed articles for this edition. A big vote of thanks to all of our dedicated foster parents, volunteers, adoptors, donors and sponsors.***