



Save a Life

Sept 2006

4<sup>th</sup> Edition

# The pet chat!

## The Mississauga Humane Society Newsletter

PO Box 152, 3353 Credit Woodlands, Mississauga, ON L5C 2K1 905-271-0883

Visit: [www.mississaugahumanesociety.com](http://www.mississaugahumanesociety.com) Email: [info@mississaugahumanesociety.com](mailto:info@mississaugahumanesociety.com)

Registered charity# 899127526RR0001



## President's Message

As always, the past few months have been an extremely busy period for us. Not only calls on stray cats and kittens come in on an almost daily basis, the number of pet surrenders has also kept increasing. To date this year, we have taken in more than 450 cats and kittens!

We are working very hard as we were fulltime staff in order to meet with every request for help so that these homeless cats will not end up killed in the overcrowded pounds everywhere. Unfortunately this sad state of affairs is taking place all the time. Sometimes the number of calls is so overwhelming that we feel like we are fighting an uphill battle. We try to keep our spirit up with the hope that one day, there will be no more stray cat or surrendering pet calls. (Is that only a dream? Will it ever come true?)

Arranging the rescue of this huge number of homeless animals takes a lot of time and efforts; it also requires a lot of foster homes and funds. I urge you to spread the word about our need for foster homes as well as funds. You can help make a difference to the lives of these precious souls.

On a lighter side, our 1<sup>st</sup> Volunteer Appreciation Party was held with great success on Aug 27. About 40 people attended and everyone had a wonderful time as all of the volunteers finally got the chance to meet and chat with each other! At the party, every volunteer was called up and recognized for their contribution and presented a Certificate of Appreciation. As well as being honoured in this fashion, an Angel Pin (representing them as our animals' guardian angels!) was also presented to each volunteer present. Our guests were particularly impressed with the vegetarian buffet dinner we served; it was both a delicious and a compassionate meal! It was especially a memorable evening for two of our foster parents as we finalized the adoption of their fostered cats, Sheera and Rob the blind cat, at the party!

We also had a Yard Sale as a fund raising day on Sep 9. Not only were we able to raise a few hundred dollars, two cats also found a home that day!

I wish you a happy Halloween and a wonderful autumn/winter!

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### MISSION STATEMENT:

"We strive to SAVE as many Homeless Companion Animals as possible, regardless of breed, age, health and behavioral issues, and find them FOREVER HOMES."

Lily Chan  
President

## Rescue Story:

### JED (HOBO)

A Change Of Life: How 'Old Jed' Became A 'Beloved Hobo'

By Lily Chan



Jed almost did not make it to his foster home.

Jed was a stray picked up by a pound in Aurora. He was thought to be 12-13 yrs old. For a big dog of this age with very weak hind legs, his chance of getting adopted out from the pound is zero. While this pound is a no kill shelter, Jed was destined to end his life there if nobody came to his rescue. This was the situation when MHS came into the picture.

A foster home had been lined up and Jed was going to be picked up from the pound that morning in May. Then I got a call from the pound. Our volunteer driver, Tom, had problems getting Jed into the car. Jed's legs were so weak and he seemed to be in so much pain that he would yelp and snap. The question was then raised as to whether or not we should rescue this very old dog that appeared to be in very poor shape.

While my mind was still wondering whether or not this would be the right choice, I heard myself saying: "Tom, this dog may have just a few days, or a few months, or even a couple of years. Nobody knows, but what we can be sure is that once he is in our hands, we will do all we can to take care of him. Even if we had to make the decision tomorrow in order to end his suffering, at least his last day on earth will be in a LOVING HOME where he will get morning kisses and nightly cuddles. Jed is not going to wither away his life in a cage or a pound!"

So Jed went off to his new foster home and our loving volunteer, Jane Hollingsworth. While there, Jed proved himself to be a friendly and gentle guy that gets along fine with other dogs and cats. After a few days, besides his extremely weak rear end, we noticed that he has been constantly pacing and panting. This could be a sign of stress, discomfort or pain? An examination by our vet confirmed severe joint/hip problems, partial blindness due to scar tissues, and possibly body pain... We were faced with another decision – should we put him to sleep to end his seemingly discomfort/pain, or should we continue with treatment, with a hope of improving his quality of life?

Jed may be a very old and fragile dog like a flickering candle, but I can tell **he has the will and spirit to live**. The way he took the treats from me and the way he sniffed things during his walk, all told me that he wants to go on with life. He may fall over after walking for a while but he will get up by himself, right away. We decided we would **let him carry on!** Jed was also given a spa-bath as we believe it would boost his spirit and confidence!

Surprisingly, the blood results of Jed came back as being perfectly fine for an old dog; he just needed medication for his severe arthritis. Despite the medication, his pacing and panting still continued. Jane, the foster mom, felt his 2 protruding teeth could have contributed the panting. A dental procedure was done, the 2 teeth were removed, and his panting stopped! Now we had to find out the reason for his constant pacing. Since his pacing mostly took place when he was inside the apartment, we figured out that Jed must have been an outdoor dog before and was not used to living indoors. One afternoon, we tried him out in an enclosed yard and observed him for several hours. Sure enough, he was not pacing any more! At this point, for his best interests, we felt Jed should be placed in a foster home with a backyard so he can live *an outdoor life*, which, obviously, he was used to.

Jed is now spoiled by Susan and Gord Russell, his new foster parents. To quote their words "We'll be his forever foster parents for his final stay on planet earth." They renamed him Hobo. They bought him a carpeted deck, a doggie condo, an umbrella in the yard, and most of the time they stay outdoors in order to spend as much time with "Sweet Old Hobo". Hobo has a very friendly demeanor and has quickly become a very popular guy on the block. He has now more strength in his hind legs with the daily walks and can walk around the block without falling over. He is making friends with everyone, doggies and humans.

**Latest news!** *Hobo* no longer wants to live outdoors!! With the love showered by Sue and Gord, he now wants to come inside and to be with his new family all the time. He's now a content indoor dog!

## Rescue & Adoption Statistics



*Kato  
Adopted*

*Jan to Sep 2006*



*Oldman  
Adopted*

Number of Dogs Rescued:	68
Number of Dogs Adopted:	60
Number of Cats Rescued:	457
Number of Cats Adopted:	288



## Membership Drive

**Have you signed up today?**

If you have not, please do so and get ready to be the winner of our monthly draw for the prize of a **Petcetra Gift Cert of \$20**. Members will also be entitled to the Year-end Draw for a Grand Prize. The Annual fee is just \$20 for Adult Member and \$5 for Kid and Fur Member.

Please email us at [info@mississaugahumanesociety.com](mailto:info@mississaugahumanesociety.com) for an Enrolment Form! **Your support as a Member will mean a lot to our rescue work!**



Congratulations to Sabine Challet, on being the 1st MHS Member, and Violette, aka Susie (Sabine's dog adopted from MHS) on being the 1st MHS Fur Member. The picture shows Sabine and Violette being 'proud' with the Certificate of Membership!

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*Congratulations*

to  
Hydro (Fur Member)  
&  
Gordon Burleigh Mattice  
Winners of the  
Aug & Sep 2006  
**Membership  
Monthly Draw**

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*Congratulations*

to  
Donna Nearing  
Winner of  
our  
Raffle Draw 2006

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## Cat Corner

### *Black is Beautiful*

*By Tina Kendall, Vice President*



As Hallowe'en approaches, the stores are full of what is possibly the most famous and most represented cat in the world – the black cat. Vilified by such horror writers as Edgar Allan Poe, and traditionally ascribed to be witches' "familiars" [i.e. a demon or devil that takes on a cat like form to travel with the witch], the black cat is a symbol of fear, evil, and the occult. Fanciful thoughts, but the truth, however, are an entirely different story.

For a cat to be black does not mean that it is somehow unusual or cursed. Common domestic black cats are genetically identical to tabby cats. In fact, black cats are simply tabby cats with black stripes and black backgrounds. Indeed, while North American folklore enjoys equating the cat's colour with the terrors of the night, other cultures see the black cat in a much more positive light.



Here are a few alternative views of our dark furry friends:

- a) In Scotland, a strange black cat on your porch is a sign of upcoming prosperity.
- b) In England, black cats are equated with good luck.
- c) The Celts thought black cats were reincarnated beings who were able to divine the future.
- d) There is a common belief in many parts of the world that stroking a black cat three times brings good luck.
- e) An old theatre superstition states that one black cat on an opening night bodes well and guarantees a successful production.
- f) An old wives' tale says that stroking the tail of a black cat will rid you of a sty in your eye.
- g) While their husbands were at sea, fishermen's wives often kept a black cat at home to ward off evil or danger.
- h) I have found that many black cats are exceptionally handsome and affectionate as well!

It is unfortunate that so many people seem to hold such an unfounded prejudice against pets who are only different in the shading of their fur. Often black cats are hard to find forever homes for when they are usually the most delightful and friendly of companions. Our website continually has black cats that you should look at and consider adopting. Why not get into the spirit?

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## THANK YOU

A BIG VOTE OF THANKS  
to Jane Hollingsworth,  
Lorna Thayer, Ana Macedo  
and Linda Campbell for  
hosting a Garage/Yard Sale  
to raise funds for our  
animals

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A BIG VOTE OF THANKS  
to Dorothy Avery of Mother  
Knows Best Dog  
Obedience School, and Ola  
Zalewski, who provide  
weekly training sessions for  
our 'challenged' dogs, on a  
complimentary basis.  
Special thanks also for her  
offer to provide 6-8 FREE  
training sessions to the  
adopters of our dogs, if  
needed

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A BIG VOTE OF THANKS  
to Part Source  
for raising funds  
for our animals  
at a BBQ event in JULY

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*Happy Hallowe'en!*

## My Pride & Joy

### *Celine and Norman*

*By Dorothee van Geete, foster parent of many dogs and cats - Norma, Norman, Celine, Bruce, Gordie, Essy, Kemi, Frank, Freida, Frisky, Jiggy, Spike, Minette, Billie & Wyatt*

One snowy day at the end of this past January, my daughter Kimberley, daughter-in-law (of one month) Stephanie and I set out to explore rural Ontario in winter. We set out to pick up what we were told was a senior deaf and blind dog (his vet's certificate just referred to him as an "old man"), and had offered to give a ride to one other dog from the same facility to become the protégé of the Mississauga Humane Society. It took us a long time to find the shelter in a little place by the name of "Glencoe", quite a drive outside of London, Ontario, and it was starting to get dark by the time we finally found the tiny shelter, which appeared to be in a Good Samaritan's backyard.

When the volunteer staff opened the door of the first crate, out came an awfully overweight, obviously blind German Shepherd/Lab mix – he was e-normous!). Named not only for his size, "E. Norman" was also named for



"Norma," my first rescue dog from the Mississauga Humane Society. Norma was an old pure-bred German Shepherd lady, and she truly was a "lady" who commanded respect and had a great sense of humour despite severe arthritis and mammary cancer. She shared the last 6 months of her life with us, and we'd like to believe she enjoyed every minute of it – Norman was meant to be her room-mate. It turned out, though, that they were not too fond of each other because each of them loved their food too much and wasn't much into sharing .... They were rather like a bickering old couple!

We soon found out that Norman was not deaf, but he was definitely blind. Unfortunately, even an eye specialist could not help recover Norman's eye sight. He diagnosed him with "degenerated retina." which can be either a hereditary condition or appear suddenly in dogs about 6-8 years old; the causes of this condition are not yet fully understood. The end result is the same in either case: The retina is atrophied to the point of blindness, and at this point there is nothing that can be done about it. The opaque greenish colour in Norman's eyes (you can notice it in the picture attached) is the result of "hyper reflection"; that is, the light that in a dog's eyes usually goes through the retina twice to enhance night vision, but rather than absorbing some of the light and passing it on to the brain, as a healthy retina would, the degenerated retina reflects more light than normal, thus giving the "gleam" to the diseased dog's eye.

Despite the somewhat eerie image this green glow in his eyes gives to E. Norman, he is not aggressive at all . . . he just knows he's blind and he better let everybody know right away that he's still in charge. All the other dogs have learned to "tiptoe" around E. Norman, and certainly not to mess with his food! They know that even though

**Norman might not be able to see or run FAST, he's "got eyes in the back of his head" when it comes to food!**

E. Norman also learned surprisingly well to find his way around our household ... up and down basement stairs, out the front door and through the gate into the backyard ... and up the steps onto my in-laws' deck, to sit with unwavering patience and stoicism until the patio door is (invariably) opened and pieces of breakfast find their way to the first tentatively searching, but then determinedly firm grasp of his snout. He must be following his nose on this journey!

## *Celine and Norman (cont)*

I don't think we could have picked up two dogs more different from one small shelter than Celine and E. Norman: One was young, skinny, fast, exuberant, full of spunk and .... loud. The other was a senior,



sedentary, stocky (yes, that's a euphemism) and very quiet . . . but not totally --They have one thing in common: They both love to sing, each in their unmistakably own way, expressing their sentiments and joy of life or at seeing their family come through the door . . . Oops make that – knowing their family is coming through the door using whatever senses they have! Norman loves to throw his head back, much like the wolf he might see himself as in his mind's eye, and howls loudly when he hears a family member come through the front door or garden gate, or when he

gets excited and joyful. It is so genuinely a sound full of joy that you cannot help but laugh and kiss him!

Because Celine "had pipes" and was extremely slender from her constant jumping and barking inside her crate, where she spent almost half of the first year of her life, I called this nameless, skinny, gorgeous young female hound-doberman mix "Celine" after her famous name sake, Celine Dion. Celine was placed in a foster home, but within the first week, she ran away from there twice in a couple of days! I was asked to look after her "for a bit." That was 9 months ago!

Celine soon proved that she had a thoroughly good temperament. However, though she was very good-natured, she had no idea that a dog could be a part of a human family. She was true a "door-dasher." Maybe it's the nose-driven hound in her, or maybe it's a habit she developed over so many months in a shelter when she would love to run any chance she could find an open gate: Whenever a door just as much as opened an inch, she'd force her way through and off she went, without regard to anything in her path . . . including cars! When we first got Celine, she was young, totally wild, and had no common sense at all. She met a lot of potential adoptive parents, and all were impressed with her gorgeous looks and good temperament, but no one could commit themselves to adopt a dog like her for their family and keep her safe. My family and I have spent many hours at all times of the day or night looking for her in an adjoining greenbelt – and have invited ourselves into more neighbours' gardens than we'd been invited to over the last 15 years!

Celine has spent 9 months with us now, and we feel she's just about ready to go out into the world. Though still very nose-driven (she always will be a hound!), Celine is trying very hard to show affection, and often is very "gawky" in her attempts to prove her love to humans. I guess, one could say that Celine took "Living with Humans" as a "Second Language", and there will always be a slight "accent" of wildness and the untamable. However, when she does look at you with just a hint of uncertainty in her eyes, but also with lots of hope that she can trust you and she is safe and wanted, she responds intuitively by trying to plant an awkward kiss on you while stealthily climbing up with long-doberman-hound legs, or by ever so tenderly taking a piece of food offered to her without ever snatching or touching your fingers with her mouth or teeth. She will be a wonderful pet and friend to someone who has the patience, time and experience to be her master!

 **Where there's a Will, there's a Way** 

## Pet Health

### Annual Examination

By Dr. Nasim Gulamhusein, DVM

Mrs. Smith brought in her 9 year old cat Molly because she had been urinating in inappropriate places for the past two years. Molly was having a physical exam done after 3 years. At her previous visit, a physical exam revealed a healthy cat, and she was vaccinated according to her risk factors. Today it was noted that Molly had lost considerable weight, was lethargic, and had an unkempt hair coat. She was subjected to a battery of tests to diagnose her medical condition, which confirmed that Molly had diabetes mellitus. Molly had this condition for almost two years, but went unnoticed by Mrs. Smith, who thought that Molly exhibited these symptoms due to old age. Mrs. Smith was under the assumption that since Molly was an indoor cat, she did not require her annual vaccinations.



However, regardless of vaccination frequency, an annual physical exam is still NECESSARY to maintain the cat's health. Today the emphasis has shifted from vaccination-driven office visits to thorough physical exams accompanied by wellness profiles including blood, urine, and perhaps radiographs. After a cat has had its kitten and one-year booster vaccinations, an annual thorough physical exam is the best preventative medicine you can provide. Your veterinarian will be able to monitor your cat's physical conditions and behaviors, as well as offer professional advice on nutrition, environment and healthcare for any medical problems that may arise. Your veterinarian can assess your cat more objectively than the cat owner who observes the cat on a daily basis. Work with your veterinarian to customize a vaccination program for your cat, but annual physical exams are a necessity.



## Wish List

- ❖ **FENCING SUPPLIES:**
  - Chain link fence - preferably 5 ft. or taller
  - Fence posts
  - Concrete mix to set posts in ground. Concrete mixer
  - Post hole digger or auger, wheel barrow..
  - Help with setting up the fence
  
- ❖ **SHEET FLOORING**
  - Click together Panels/Vinyl/Rubber
  
- ❖ **DOG WALKERS**
  - Pl contact John Howe 905-793-8852*

## 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 volunteers and sponsors. Without your support, the Mississauga Humane Society would not be able to achieve its mission.

## Classifieds

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