



# What's new pussycat?

winter 2006

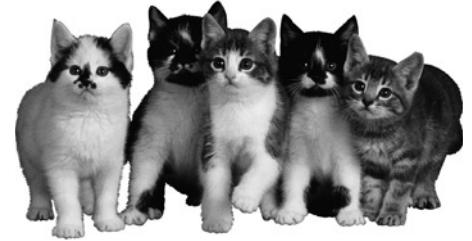
## Spay in February, Help Prevent Kitten Season

EVERY YEAR DURING "KITTEN SEASON", (late April through mid-September), broken-hearted shelter personnel across the country have to kill hundreds of thousands kittens for lack of homes. February is an ideal time to get cats spayed or neutered, before the heat season really gets in gear.

Cats can go into heat beginning in January, and will cycle frequently until spayed or bred. Owners often feel they're "out of the woods" after keeping their yowling cat indoors for 10 days or so, only have her go back into heat again a few days later. Cats can also go into heat about a week after having a litter. Many cat owners who don't know this end up with surprise unwanted kittens.

Some cat owners mistakenly believe they should wait until their cat has had her first litter, or at least wait until she is six months old, before spaying or neutering. The "just one litter" practice is responsible for the euthanasia of many unwanted kittens in our shelters. Some females are already pregnant by six months. If they are sterilized before their first heat, they are protected from mammary tumors later in life. Male cats neutered before full sexual maturity are less likely to spray.

At the Shenandoah Valley Spay & Neuter Clinic, the veterinarians recommend sterilizing your cat between 12 and 16 weeks of age, if possible. The vets at SVSNC are experts at



juvenile spay/neuter, and the kittens bounce back from their surgery beautifully.

Regardless of the season, the best time to have your cat spayed or neutered is always NOW! Of course the veterinarian will need to be sure there are no medical problems before proceeding, but if you have intact cats at home, call your vet or the Clinic today! And if you need financial assistance, contact Cat's Cradle.

Happy Spay/Neuter Month!

## SVSNC Update

"THANK YOU, THANK YOU!" says Cate Mansfield, Clinic director, "to my amazing team who so willingly work 13 hour days, then are back again at 6:45 a. m. ready to do it again." The Clinic has averaged 29 animals a day, for an amazing total of 6165 animals fixed in 2005. "We will reach 6700 by our Anniversary on January 24<sup>th</sup>," says Mansfield.

"Thanks, too, to the Cat's Cradle volunteers, donors, benefactors, and all others who have helped us reach this amazing goal. I hope they will ALL come celebrate with us at our OPEN HOUSE on the 24<sup>th</sup>." Cate Mansfield is beaming!

## Cat's Cradle's Northern Virginia "Branch"

Kind people in Northern Virginia play an important part in meeting Cat's Cradle's mission. Since we started transporting cats to the PetSmart in Crystal City for adoption, we have made many friends.

Friends like Mary Fraser who helps Betsy Holmes, our adoption coordinator, break down cages nearly every weekend. And like Anne Levine, who fosters for us, adopted from us, and brought down a big load of stuff for our yard sale.

For some of our shy or older cats, it's a boon to have foster parents "up north" who

can allow possible adopters to see the cats in a less stressful setting than a big store. Being able to stay there also saves some of these special needs cats the 2 ½ hour trip back and forth.

Our friends in Northern Virginia often make on-going contributions to Cat's Cradle. We received over \$2,000 in donations from these caring people in 2005.

Most important, loving families from Northern Virginia have adopted nearly 500 cats from us to date through PetSmart's generous adoption partnership program.

### First Anniversary Open House

February 25, 2:00 to 4:00 p. m.

### Shenandoah Valley Spay & Neuter Clinic

910 N. Liberty Street, Harrisonburg, VA

**Tours - Refreshments - Door Prizes**

Hosted by Cat's Cradle and SVSNC  
RSVP 437-1980 or josiek@verizon.net

### Cat's Cradle Mission Statement

THE CAT'S CRADLE'S MISSION is to provide no-kill alternatives for stray cats and kittens. Cat's Cradle has no operating facilities and consists solely of volunteers working from their homes. Cat's Cradle believes there are better ways to deal with the ever-growing population of homeless cats other than euthanasia, such as 1) a low-cost spay/neuter program, 2) an adoption program, 3) a feral program, 4) a veterinary medical care assistance program and 5) humane education.

# Dear Friend of Cat's Cradle



HAPPY NEW YEAR! I hope each of you had a peaceful holiday, filled with time for family and friends. The staff at the Shenandoah Valley Spay/Neuter Clinic

took a much deserved two-week break after performing 6165 surgeries in 2005,

It would be nice to sit by the fire and reflect upon these accomplishments, but that is not possible. Even though the days are short and cold, this is the prime time for spay/neuter. January and February are particularly good months as cats are not in heat, pregnant or

nursing. We can not adopt our way out of the pet overpopulation problem. A statistic on Maddie's Fund web-site states "To end pet overpopulation of adoptable animals, each person (not each family, but each person) must have 8 cats and 4 dogs." That is not feasible. Aggressive spay/neuter is the answer.

Thanks to all of you who supported our 4th annual Christmas fundraiser and remembered us with generous donations during the holidays. Please stick with us. We are willing and able to make a big difference in euthanasia rates in the valley. Your support makes that possible.

Suzanne Auckerman  
President

## Feline Eye Disease

by Dr. Kathryn Dobyms, DVM

AS ANY EXPERIENCED cat rescuer knows, eye infections are very common and highly contagious between cats. In affected cats, the tissues around the eye and under the eyelids (conjunctiva) will be swollen and red. One or both eyes may be involved. In some cases, the eyelids will be matted shut with sticky debris. More severe cases may involve the cornea also - this is the clear outer surface of the eyeball. The cornea may become cloudy, ulcerated and painful. Permanent scarring and vision impairment often occurs when the cornea is affected. Affected cats may also have respiratory symptoms, including sneezing, coughing, runny nose and poor appetite. Most eye infections are caused by the feline herpesvirus, along with many kinds of bacteria. Herpesvirus is easily transmitted from cat to cat, and it can even be transmitted on clothing, food and water bowls, litter pans and toys.

Treatment involves cleaning the eyes frequently with a warm damp cloth and

applying antibiotic medications to the eyes. Medications may need to be applied as often as every 4 hours. If there are additional symptoms (sneezing, coughing), oral antibiotics will be prescribed also. Lysine is a nutritional supplement that can also help reduce symptoms.

Once a cat has been infected with herpesvirus, it will be infected life-long. Since the cat can never completely clear the herpesvirus infection, symptoms will frequently recur in times of stress. Keeping the cat in a low-stress environment with a predictable routine and preventing exposure to other cats is the best long-term management strategy. Vaccination of infected cats may help to stimulate the cat's immune system to keep the virus in a dormant state, or at least may help to reduce the severity of symptoms. Vaccination of healthy cats does not prevent infection with herpesvirus, but it does help minimize the severity of symptoms if a cat should become infected later.

## Memorials

| <u>In Memory Of</u>                  | <u>Sent in by</u>   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Shirley Earman</b>                | Mary Boraddus<br>Madelyn Dixon<br>Marlene Key<br>Alice Lane<br>Elsie Mitchell<br>Mary Simmons<br>Doris Summers<br>Suzanne Rogerson  |
| <b>Bill Groleau</b>                  | Nancy Noblette  |
| <b>Jeanne G. Kirk</b>                | Jean Andrews<br>Dorothy Bailey<br>Christine Bilbrey<br>Kelly Burkholder<br>Daniel Conrad<br>Alisa Cook<br>Laura Douglass<br>David Driver<br>Lana and Mel Griffin<br>David Heckert<br>Ann and Bill Hodge<br>Virginia Joseph<br>Elizabeth Knicely<br>Diane Lending<br>Janice Light<br>Patty<br>and George Lovegrove<br>Esther Lovell<br>and Family<br>Betty Monger<br>Janice Peppell-Wojdula<br>and Family<br>Leafy Rexrode<br>Corinne Richter<br>Robert and<br>Sandra Silberg<br>Juanita Slusher<br>Alan and<br>Michele Strawderman<br>Dorothy and<br>Walker Thompson<br>Lucy Weston<br>Marlene Wilbarger<br>and Elizabeth Eakle<br>Lynn Reams |
| <b>Noah Terscheuren</b>              |   |
| <b>"Casey"</b>                       |   |
| <b>"Ferdinand" and "Sweetie Pea"</b> | Robin Mamola<br>Susan Mansfield   |
| <b>"Koska"</b>                       | Ruth Ann Noblette   |
| <b>"Nemo"</b>                        | Elizabeth Kaestner<br>Rick Loudon   |
| <b>"Rascal"</b>                      | Cate Mansfield<br>Catherine Hildreth  |
| <b>"Sebastian"</b>                   |   |
| <b>"Susie"</b>                       |   |

### Wish List

Our cats, clinic and volunteer teams have real needs for the following items:

| <b>Foster Cats</b>  | <b>Rescue Team</b> | <b>The Clinic</b>    | <b>Fund-raising Team</b>             |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Cat food            | Cat traps          | Surgical Instruments | Stamps                               |
| Non-clumping litter | Cat carriers       | Velcro cat muzzles   | Office Space                         |
| Paper Towels        | Sheets, towels     | Heated surgery table | Color Laser printer                  |
| Litter Boxes        | (used is fine)     | Non-tipping cat      | Post-it Pads                         |
| Bleach              | Van for transport  | water bowls          | Storage space for<br>yard sale items |
|                     |                    | Stack washer/dryer   |                                      |
|                     |                    | Prep Sink            |                                      |

Donated items can be dropped off at the SVSNC at 910 N. Liberty St., (540) 437-1980.

## Condolences

We extend our deepest heartfelt condolences to the family of Noah Terscheuren on their tragic loss. Noah was a good friend of Cat's Cradle and will be sadly missed.

## Excerpts from a Letter from Rachel and Pete Bagnulo

Casey was our beloved Golden Retriever adopted from GRREAT Dog Rescue when she was 10. She battled kidney failure for two years before finally succumbing. We would like to thank the Clinic for all their help and support and all the Cat's Cradle volunteers who called and wrote to say they were sorry for our loss. "Cat people" understand how hard it is to lose a member of the family. We are thankful that the donation made in memory of her will go to help other rescued animals. We're so thankful for the time we had with her and we're proud that we are associated with such wonderful groups as Cat's Cradle, the Spay Neuter Clinic and GRREAT.



## Holiday Home Tour and Festival of Trees a Success



CAT'S CRADLE'S FOURTH ANNUAL Home Tour and Festival of Trees was a success once again, raising over \$12,000. We wish to thank our major sponsors: Riverbank Longhorns, Massanutten Realty, Classic Kitchens, and Perry's Appliance, all local businesses owned by cat lovers, each of whom gave at least \$500. We also wish to thank the hosts: Robert Good Photography Studio, Hearth & Holly B&B, Widow Pence Farm, the Marshes, and Mill Creek Church of the Brethren for opening their doors so warmly. And of course we would not have been able to do this without the dozens of other sponsors and nearly fifty volunteers who contributed in so many ways. See you next year!

## Volunteers Wanted

**Outreach Coordinator** to plan, schedule and oversee events and outings such as booths at Dayton Days, the International Festival, the county fair, etc. The Outreach Coordinator will ensure a consistent appearance for Cat's Cradle outings; supply outreach materials and coordinate volunteers. This position needs a "people person" who enjoys working with volunteers and meeting the public.

**Permanent Record Keeper** to collect, record, and file all records involving the intake of animals, tracking animals while under Cat's Cradle's control, and ultimate release from Cat's Cradle's possession. This person must be very detail oriented and able to work independently.

Both positions will gain satisfaction from working to help cats in the Valley area.

To discuss these positions please contact: Josie Kinkade at 540-967-1905 or [josiek@verizon.net](mailto:josiek@verizon.net)

## Sardine Sushi

2 flat cans of sardines in oil (Do not drain)      1 tablespoon pureed liver  
2/3 cup cooked rice      1/4 cup chopped parsley

Combine all ingredients and mix well. Shape into balls of desired size or simply spoon into cat's dish and serve. These treats may be stored in the refrigerator for up to three days, and may also be frozen.

## Staff Profile

### Betsy Holmes

Betsy Holmes of Luray has a soft spot in her heart for cats. "I don't know what it is," she says. "I've always felt that it was my role in life to love and care for cats. It's my way of giving service, I guess." Betsy's caring heart and Cat's Cradle's need for an adoption coordinator came together almost two years ago to greatly benefit both cats and cat lovers throughout the Valley and in Northern Virginia.

Betsy spends many hours every weekend transporting adoptable cats for Cat's Cradle to the PetSmart store in Crystal City, near Washington, D. C. She loads about 20 cats into the van in Harrisonburg, then drives to Crystal City, moves the cats into the store and makes sure they have food and water in their cages. From 3 p. m. until 9 p. m. and again all day Saturday and Sunday she talks to the many people who come to look at the cats, "selling" them on the idea of adoption. "Sometimes only one or a few cats get adopted, but a few weeks ago 15 cats found new homes. That really gave me a good feeling!" said Betsy.

Susanne Auckerman, president of Cat's Cradle says, "Betsy is a real asset to the adoption program. Her goal in adoptions is for it to be perfect for the kitty and perfect for the person. Nothing less is acceptable to her."

Cat's Cradle (and lots of people and cats) is grateful for Betsy Holmes kind heart, and excellent work. Thanks, Betsy!





## I want to help the cats ... here's my donation

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Here is my check for:

\$100 Sponsors a Rescue    \$50 Sponsors a Spay    \$35 Sponsors a Neuter    Other \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like to Volunteer.

Please fill out this coupon and send it in to **Cat's Cradle, P.O. Box 2152, Harrisonburg, VA 22801**

## Sharing the Love

*by Andrea Criscione*

CAT'S CRADLE may have rescued Beatrice and her newborn kittens, but Beatrice graciously returned the favor. Only 2 years old and pregnant, Beatrice was dropped at an area shelter last spring. The day before the feline family's scheduled euthanasia, Cat's Cradle took the mother and her three two-day old kittens, placing them with Sharon Davis, a foster caregiver for Cat's Cradle. While nursing her kittens, Beatrice lovingly accepted two motherless kittens, nursing and caring for them as if they were her own.

Sharon describes Beatrice as a good mother who loved everybody. The affectionate orange tabby sat peacefully on her lap to be groomed, but also rambunctiously played

with her growing kittens. "She obviously came from a loving home," said Sharon, expressing her confusion over why Beatrice was left at the shelter. It is indeed a mystery that such a loving cat would be deserted. One possibility is that her owner was not prepared for the unspayed cat to add kittens to the household.

When they were ready, Beatrice and her biological and adopted kittens were taken to PetSmart to be adopted out to loving homes. While the kittens were adopted right away, it did take a few trips before Beatrice found the right family. Today, her adoptive family reports, "Beatrice is outstanding and likes to sit on everyone's lap. She purrs constantly."



Finally, the loving mother cat, so willing to care for and adopt other cats, was adopted to be loved and cared for, as well.

*Return Service Requested*

**P.O. Box 2152  
Harrisonburg VA 22801**



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