

4 PAWS PRESS

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WINTER 2013

Greetings from 4Paws,

2013 has been a busy and gratifying year for 4Paws. As of December 1, we've found loving homes for more than 300 cats and kittens. In total, since 4Paws volunteers rescued the first starving kitten, volunteers have saved more than 7,600 cats. Currently, we have 160 cats in foster care awaiting adoption.

In 2014, 4Paws will add new adoption sites. In addition to semi-monthly fairs held at the Fairfax Petco, fairs will be held at the Sterling Petco on the first Sunday of each month. There are currently five Petco locations where 4Paws displays cats—Alexandria, Burke, Chantilly, Fairfax, and Tysons Corner. We have been invited to display adoptable cats in the Annandale and new Manassas stores. When we have enough volunteers to cover two shifts daily, we will move cats into these new locations.

Most cats rescued by 4Paws come from local and rural animal shelters. Every day we get frantic calls and emails from shelters begging 4Paws to take cats and kittens whose time is running out. When the shelters are full, cats already in the shelters must be euthanized to make room for new arrivals.

Over the summer, 4Paws received some particularly distressing calls from shelters overrun with mother cats and kittens. The idea of newborn kittens killed before they even had a chance at life was unacceptable. With a swell of community support, 4Paws was able to rescue more than

On the left, is a photo of a very sick Pearl when she was first rescued by 4Paws. On the right, healthy and happy Pearl in her forever home.

150 of those kittens and mothers. Saving all those lives had its cost. Many suffered from medical issues including, diarrhea and upper respiratory infections, resulting in high vet bills. Fortunately, all survived and most are spending the holidays in their forever homes.

In 2013, we were able to rescue more cats than previous years; some of those rescues were harrowing experiences. **Pearl** was discovered, nearly dead, in a urine soaked bag, thrown in the trash. Weak from malnutrition, flea infestation, dehydration and upper respiratory infection, Pearl could not stand on her own or eat without assistance. With close supervision and a lot of TLC, Pearl began to regain her strength and was eventually adopted into a loving home.

Rescued from a high-kill shelter in Roanoke, **Frisky** was pregnant and about to be euthanized when 4Paws stepped in. Malnourished and underweight, she gave birth to five kittens just days after leaving the shelter. Unfortunately, none of the kittens survived and Frisky barely made it through the ordeal. Without emergency surgery, Frisky would have died.

Chip, a kitten rescued this summer, nearly died when a raging mouth infection kept him from getting proper nutrition. Each time he completed a course of antibiotics, Chip would get sick again. Visits to specialists determined that Chip has chronic gum disease. He needs several teeth pulled and intricate dental work to clear away infection so he can thrive.

Several cats rescued by 4Paws required extraordinary vet care. **Wyatt** and **Lucille** each required surgery to remove growths from their

ears. **Sriracha's** leg had healed badly from an old fracture limiting his ability to use his limb. After his leg was rebroken and surgically stabilized, it took several weeks to heal properly. **Thomas**, recently rescued, has multiple leg fractures. Surgery is scheduled imminently. **Van Halen** and **SP3** each needed eye surgery. Van Halen's eye could not be saved, but SP3's ruptured cornea was repaired after multiple surgeries.

As in recent years, many cats previously adopted through 4Paws were returned. A cat rescued by 4Paws is rescued for life. This means any cat adopted from 4Paws can be returned at any time if the owner can no longer care for him. Many of the cats returned to 4Paws are older thus using more of our financial resources.

Last month, four cats adopted as kittens were returned. **Willow**, a 13-year old declawed female was returned in a state of distress. We treated her urinary tract infection and now she is a purring machine. **Chandler**, an 8 year old cat, sweet and loving, was returned because of frequent vomiting and weight loss. **Phoenix**, 9 years old, could no longer be cared for by his sick owners. Under the care of 4Paws, he was diagnosed with diabetes and is currently being treated. And **Angel**, a 6 year old declawed female was displaced by a newly adopted dog.

Every year it becomes harder to raise the funds needed to save lives. Vet expenses go up while donations go down. Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), workplace giving by federal workers, is a major source of donations for 4Paws. In 2013, CFC donations to 4Paws dropped 15%. With yet another potential government shutdown looming, the prospects for 2014 do not look good.

Please consider making a contribution to 4Paws. You can be sure that every dollar donated will be put to good use. Last year, 95% of every dollar donated went directly to benefit the cats. We cannot save these precious lives without your financial assistance. Thank you and have a safe and warm holiday season.

Barbara Lipson

Barbara Lipson, President
4Paws Rescue Team

