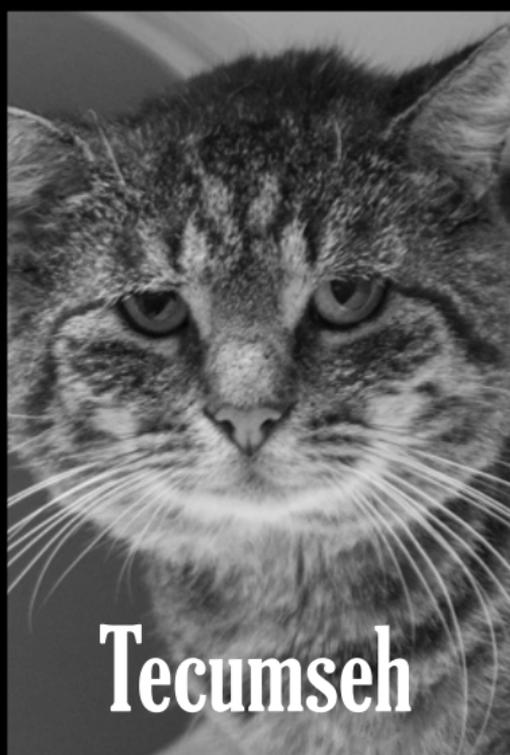




Blondie



Happy



Tecumseh



Magellan





4 PAWS PRESS

WINTER 2016

ISSUE # 29

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

FOR TWENTY-ONE YEARS, 4Paws volunteers have dedicated their time and energy to rescuing homeless cats. Since the beginning, 4Paws has found loving homes for more than 8,800 cats and kittens; more than 450 of those were adopted out during 2016.

For many rescued cats, it is an uphill battle to gain strength and become healthy enough for adoption. Many have fought illness, malnutrition, or injury from a hard life outside. Others, in addition to physical challenges, battle emotional trauma and must learn to trust people again.

During 2016, 4Paws rescued a group of homeless cats trying to survive in an area of eastern West Virginia.

DONATE TO 4PAWS

Please consider making a tax-deductible donation.

- 🐾 \$50 feeds a mother and her kittens for a month
- 🐾 \$95 spays a female cat
- 🐾 \$150 vaccinates a litter of kittens for rabies
- 🐾 \$220 pays for a dental cleaning
- 🐾 \$300 spays and neuters a litter of kittens

Online: Pay by credit card at fourpaws.org, click on Donating to 4Paws.

By mail: 4Paws Rescue Team, P.O. Box 2908, Merrifield, VA 22116

Workplace giving:

CFC 34517 (Federal workers)

CVC 3472 (Virginia state workers)

Note: 2017 is the first year that federal retirees can designate a portion of their retirement income to 4Paws through CFC.

Please remember 4Paws when doing your estate planning.

Prompted by neighbor complaints, Animal Control set out to eliminate the "cat problem." Concerned citizens were threatened with jail for feeding these poor creatures. In all, 4Paws rescued more than 150 cats and kittens from this site—many of which were friendly and adoptable. Of those saved, more than 60 were young kittens.

Before finding forever-homes, 4Paws provided vaccines, testing, spay/neuter and nursed them back to health. Several have been adopted and are living lives of comfort, not worrying about their next meal. The rest still wait for their chance to know the love and security of a permanent home.

A couple dozen of these cats were feral and unsuitable for indoor homes. They were vaccinated and sterilized and arrangements were made to return them outdoors where caretakers continue to feed them. This process Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) is widely regarded as the best option for providing quality of life to feral cats and curb the pet overpopulation crisis. Once sterilized, feral cats no longer reproduce, thus breaking the cycle of birth, suffering, and death.

Our resources were drained by the West Virginia rescues, as well as by our ongoing efforts to rescue cats from euthanasia at animal shelters. Donations are desperately needed. Any amount is appreciated. You can also help by donating wet and dry cat food, unscented cat litter, and collapsible metal crates.

Foster homes are critical to our work. 4Paws can only save lives to the extent that fosters are available to provide temporary shelter. For more information, see inside, *What is Fostering?*

As another year draws to a close, once again, I thank you for your support. We could not continue to save precious feline lives without your help.

Happy holidays and best wishes for the New Year,

Barbara Lipson

BEYOND BASIC CARE

Every cat rescued by 4Paws is rescued for life. If a situation arises where an adopter can no longer care for his 4Paws cat, our adoption contract requires that the cat be returned to 4Paws. When cats are returned, they are often significantly older (10+ years) than when originally adopted out as kittens.

These cats as well as others rescued during the year often require costly diagnostics and procedures. During 2016, 4Paws provided dental cleanings and extractions for several dozen cats. Broken or rotten teeth cause severe pain, make eating difficult, and often leading to heart disease. It is amazing to see a cat transform from angry and unapproachable into a loving companion after a bad tooth is removed.

Often, cats come to 4Paws with urinary issues. A diet of solely dry food can upset the PH balance of a cat's urine, causing the formation of crystals which can lead to urinary tract blockage and possible death. This year, several cats required urinalyses and other costly procedures before they could be adopted into forever-homes.

At 4Paws, our rescued cats routinely receive vaccines, blood testing for feline leukemia and FIV, neuter surgery, and treatment for common illnesses. When a cat needs extraordinary care above and beyond the routine, we do not hesitate to go the extra step. Your generous donations ensure that we can continue to provide such a high level of care.

Below are a couple of our cats who needed more than routine care.



Cutie

When rescued, **Cutie's** right eye was smaller than the left. A visit to an ophthalmologist revealed that she was partially blind. Also, her eyelid had rolled inward toward her eye. Surgery corrected the structure of the eyelid alleviating the terrible discomfort and constant rubbing of the lashes against her eyeball.

A local shelter desperate for help, contacted 4Paws about **Celeste** soon after her arrival. Her eye was horribly injured, painful, and bulging. 4Paws rushed her to the vet where the eye was surgically removed. Celeste underwent weeks of antibiotics and treatment. Now she gets around fine; the loss of the eye doesn't seem to bother her at all.



Celeste

LONG-TERM FOSTER CARE

4Paws volunteers are deeply invested in every feline life we save. Many of our rescues come to us sick and scared, sometimes injured. 4Paws provides vet care, nurses them back to health, and with love and patience, teaches them to trust.

The majority of our cats become healthy and strong under 4Paws' care, eventually being adopted into loving homes. When one of our rescues is chronically sick or elderly and less likely to find a forever-home, we do not turn our backs. These cats deserve a life filled with love, even if their time is shorter than most. For these cats 4Paws looks for long term foster volunteers. 4Paws continues to pay medical expenses including visits to specialists and prescription food.

Recently, 4Paws was contacted about seven cats who had lived in a mobile home with an elderly woman that died. After her death, the cats were abandoned outside to fend for themselves. It took several attempts, but eventually 4Paws volunteers rescued all seven cats. Two of the cats—**Red Cloud** and **Tall Chief**—are 14 years old and FIV+.

Feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) compromises a cat's immune system requiring that a caretaker be diligent with both wellness and illness care.



Tall Chief

Before coming to 4Paws, these cats received neither regular vet care nor good nutrition. They have led difficult lives and, as a result, have medical issues. They both suffer from poor dental health, but through 4Paws, have received extensive dental care. Tall Chief has an oral mass that may require treatment by a veterinary oncologist. They are both prone to urinary crystals and must eat only prescription food.

FIV is not passed from cats to humans or dogs. It is strictly a feline virus that passes between cats through deep puncture wounds. Non-aggressive cats are at no risk of passing the virus.

Both boys are sweet and loving. Red Cloud is affectionate, talkative, and will reach out for your attention. Tall Chief is just as sweet, but not as chatty. Tall Chief has a collapsed ear, probably from an ear mite infection that went untreated for months or years. Both cats previously lived with dogs and cats. The boys do not need to stay together.



Red Cloud



Meadowlark

Meadowlark came to 4Paws from a local shelter after living in a cage for two months. Shelter workers thought she was feral, but as 4Paws volunteers suspected, she was just terrified. Meadowlark is 10 to 12 years old and carries herself as an older cat, sleeping a lot. She is very loving with people

and other cats. Meadowlark eats prescription food to maintain her blood sugar levels. She is in the early stages of kidney disease and receives fluids weekly.

Scout was dumped on the door step of a cat-lover who called 4Paws for help. Trying to survive outside, Scout was emaciated. In the early weeks after her rescue, it was a struggle to get her to eat because she had become acclimated to going without food.

Scout was diagnosed with chronic kidney disease that has since progressed to kidney failure. Her appetite is back and she seems to be doing well, but we do not know how much time she has. Currently Scout receives subcutaneous fluids every other week.

She does not get along with other cats so is confined to a single room. She is very loving, constantly craves attention. Scout will sit with her person for hours on end, asking for little more than a scratch and a pet. She needs a foster home where she is the only cat and can have free run of the house while being lavished with attention.

If you have room in your heart and home for any of these deserving cats, please contact 4Paws at info@fourpaws.org or call 703.715.MEOW (6369) for more information.

WHAT IS FOSTERING?

Foster volunteers make our work at 4Paws possible. We cannot save lives without a place for the cats to go. As a foster, you comfort a newly-rescued kitten when she is scared; provide nourishment to a cat that has never known the comfort of regular meals; and rebuild confidence so a cat can start a new life with an adoptive family.

While fosters provide food, shelter and love, 4Paws pays for pre-authorized vet care. Put that spare room to good use! Give a homeless cat a chance at a happy life. For more information contact 4Paws at 703.715.6369 or email info@fourpaws.org.

UPCOMING ADOPTION FAIRS

Visit our virtual adoption fair at www.fourpaws.org or meet our cats at an adoption fair.

Fairfax Petco 10708 Lee Highway | Fairfax | 703.352.3300
Saturday, December 17, January 14 and 28, 1-5 pm

Sterling Petco 22000 Dulles Retail Plaza | Sterling | 571.434.6562
Sunday, December 11, January 8, February 12, 1-4 pm

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

In 2016, 4Paws took on a massive project to rescue more than 150 homeless cats and kittens in peril in West Virginia. We also saved hundreds of cats and kittens scheduled to die in local and rural animal shelters. Before being adopted into a loving home, every cat receives an exam, vaccines, and is sterilized if old enough. The challenge of ever-increasing vet costs makes our work that much harder.

4Paws has relied heavily on Combined Federal Campaign (federal workplace giving) to fund our operations. Unfortunately, donations from CFC have continued to decline over the last decade. In 2016, CFC donations covered less than 20% of our costs. This means, we rely on your donations to fund our \$250,000 annual budget. This year, 4Paws found loving homes for more than 450 cats and kittens—more than 8,800 saved over the past 21 years. Our \$120 adoption fee for a neutered adult does not come close to covering the cost of testing, vaccinating, and sterilizing a healthy cat.

With very little overhead—no salaries or rent to pay—95¢ of every dollar you donate to 4Paws goes directly toward caring for the cats. You can trust that your donation will be used as you intend—to save feline lives. Please donate today!

YES, I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution in the amount of \$_____.

(Please make checks payable to 4Paws, mail to: P.O. Box 2908, Merrifield, VA 22116)

I want to volunteer, please contact me.

I want updates, please add me to your distribution list:

NAME _____

TELEPHONE _____ EMAIL _____

I have moved, please update my address.

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____

Remember 4Paws in your will and be sure to let us know!

4Paws Rescue Team is a 501(c)(3) organization and all contributions are fully tax deductible as allowed by law.



Valentine and Delilah

STILL WAITING...

There are two tenets that 4Paws' volunteers hold dear. First, our organization is a "no kill" shelter which means that a cat rescued by 4Paws has a safe place to stay until an adoptive home is found. Sometimes the sweetest cats stay in foster homes for several months before the right adopter notices them; re-homing bonded pairs is especially difficult.

Second, a cat rescued by 4Paws is rescued for life. If an owner can no longer care for a 4Paws cat, we will take that cat back. It could be two months or ten years after the initial adoption, 4Paws will always welcome our rescues back.

Valentine and **Delilah** came from a rural shelter with their mom. Exposed to pan leuk in utero, the kittens developed the neurological condition cerebellar hypoplasia (CH). Valentine has difficulty maintaining her balance. She often shakes or falls when walking or running. Valentine is good about using the litter box, but sometimes loses her balance and needs extra help cleaning up. Delilah's symptoms are barely noticeable. The CH symptoms don't slow them down at all—they especially like to roll around, playing rough and tumble with each other. Now 7 months old, they are spayed, vaccinated and tested. They get along with other cats and dogs. Are you ready to add these balls of energy to your family? They sure are ready for you!

Gracie and **Hobbes** were adopted from 4Paws as young kittens. They were returned after their owner died. Now, 8 years old, the girls have been in a 4Paws foster home for almost a year. They have been waiting so long, we would consider adopting them out separately if that would get them into forever-homes sooner. Gracie is a talkative silver tabby, very social with both people and other cats. Hobbes is affectionate and loving with people, but the only other cat she tolerates is Gracie. Hobbes can be bossy and strong willed, so if she is adopted without Gracie, she should be a single pet. Both girls are on a wet food diet in order to maintain their urinary tract health. They are snuggly and playful, often hugging and showering each other with kisses.