

LONG-TERM FOSTER CARE

4Paws volunteers are deeply invested in every feline life we save. Many of our rescues are sick and scared, sometimes injured when we take them off the street or from a high-kill shelter. We provide vet care (illness and wellness), nurse them back to health, and using love and patience teach them to trust.

The vast majority of our cats become healthy and strong under 4Paws' care and are eventually 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 hard to adopt cats, 4Paws looks for long term foster homes. 4Paws continues to pay the medical expenses including visits to specialists and prescription food.

Recently, 4Paws rescued seven cats that had been living in a mobile home with an elderly woman. After her death, the adult son put the cats outside to fend for themselves. Two of the cats—**Red Cloud** and **Tall Chief**—are 14 years old and FIV+.

Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) is not a death sentence, but does compromise a cat's immune system requiring that a caretaker be diligent with both well-



ness and illness care. The virus is not passed from cats to humans or dogs. It is exchanged between cats through deep puncture wounds. Non-aggressive cats are not at risk of passing the virus to another cat.

Red Cloud and Tall Chief did not receive regular vet care or good nutrition. They both suffer from poor dental health. Tall Chief has an oral mass that may require treatment by a veterinary oncologist. Both are prone to urinary crystals and eat prescription-only

food. These boys are sweet and loving despite all they have endured. They deserve to live out their years in comfort surrounded by love. Red Cloud is affectionate and talkative, he will reach out for your attention. Tall Chief is equally loving. He has a collapsed ear, from an untreated ear mite infection. They have lived with dogs so would adjust to a foster home with dogs or cats and do not need to stay together.

Meadowlark first came to 4Paws from a local shelter where she lived in a cage for two months. Shelter workers thought she was feral because she frequently lashed out at caretakers, but 4Paws volunteers suspected she was just terrified.



Meadowlark is approximately 10 to 12 years old. She seems older and sleeps a lot. Despite her experience at the shelter, she is very loving with people and gets along well with other cats. Meadowlark is eating prescription food for diabetes which maintains her blood sugar, eliminating the need for insulin. She is starting to show signs of kidney disease and receives fluids weekly. Meadowlark does get startled easily so she will do best in a foster home without small children.

Scout was dumped on the door step of a cat-lover in Springfield who called 4Paws for help. It obvious that she had been living outside, trying to survive without much food, Scout became used to going without. In the early weeks after her rescue, it was a struggle to get her to eat a proper amount. Scout was diagnosed with chronic kidney disease that has since progressed to kidney failure. Her appetite is back and she is 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 craving 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.

If you have room in your heart and home for any of these deserving cats, please contact 4Paws at info@fourpaws.org or

WHAT IS FOSTERING

Foster volunteers make our work at 4Paws possible. By fostering, you are on the front lines of 4Paws' efforts.

After receiving initial vet care, a rescued cat's first contact with 4Paws is his foster home. The foster comforts a newly-rescued kitten when he is scared, provides nourishment to a cat that has never before known the comfort of regular meals, and rebuilds confidence until he finds a permanent loving home.

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 come to an adoption fair at a Petco store to meet some of the cats waiting for forever-homes.

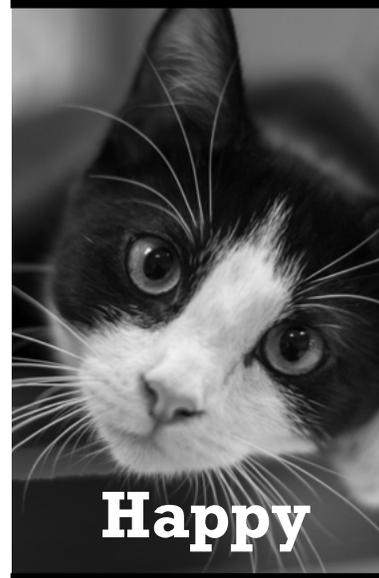
Fairfax Petco 10708 Lee Highway | Fairfax | 703.352.3300
Saturday, December 17, January 14 and 28, 1-5 pm

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

Cats pictured on the cover were adopted from 4Paws.



Blondie



Happy

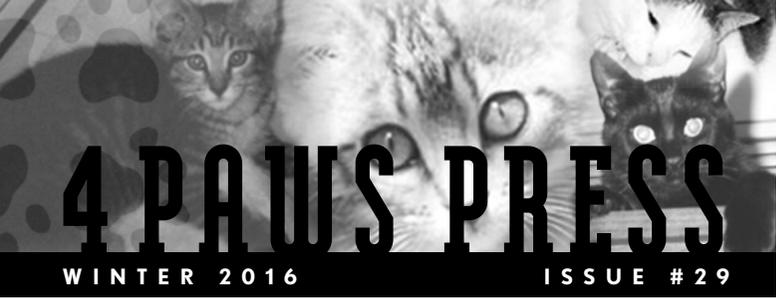


Tecumseh



Magellan





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 were adopted out during 2016. Before they find forever-homes, 4Paws provides vet care—both wellness and illness.

Foster volunteers provide love and security in their homes. For many rescued cats, it is a long uphill battle to get strong and healthy enough for adoption. Several cats are fighting illness, malnourished, or injured from a hard life outside. Others, in addition to physical challenges, battle emotional traumas, learning to trust people again.

In 2016, 4Paws became aware of a group of homeless cats trying to survive in a populated area of eastern West Virginia. Prompted by neighbor complaints, Animal Control set out to eliminate the “cat problem”. Concerned citizens were threatened with jail for feeding these poor creatures.

Volunteers from NOVA set out to save the cats before Animal Control could kill them. They expected to find a couple dozen cats; in all, more than 150 cats and kittens were rescued—many of which were friendly and adoptable. Of those saved, more than 60 were kittens.

4Paws provided vaccines, testing, spay/neutering, and, for many, nursed them back to health. Many have been adopted into permanent homes and are finally living lives of comfort, not worrying about where their next meals will come from. Several are still waiting for a chance to know the love and security of an adoptive home.

A couple dozen of these cats were feral and not suitable for indoor homes. The cats were vaccinated and sterilized, then arrangements were made to return them to their outdoor homes where caretakers would feed them. This process, commonly known as trap-neuter-return (TNR), is widely regarded as the best option for providing quality of life to feral cats and at the same time, helping to stop the pet overpopulation crisis. Once sterilized, feral cats no longer reproduce, thus, breaking the cycle of birth, suffering, and death.

In 2016, 4Paws resources were drained by our rescue work in West Virginia, as well as continued efforts to rescue cats in imminent danger of being euthanized at local and rural animal shelters. Donations are desperately needed. For some, monthly donations are easier to manage. Any amount is appreciated.

Barbara Lipson

BEYOND BASIC CARE

Any cat rescued by 4Paws is rescued for life. If a situation arises where an adopter can no longer care for their 4Paws cats, our adoption contract requires that the cat be returned to 4Paws—not taken to an animal shelter. When cats are returned, they are often significantly older (10 or more years).

Returned 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 can lead 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.

More often, cats come to 4Paws with urinary issues. A diet of only dry food can upset the PH balance of a cat’s urine, causing the formation of crystals which leads to urinary tract blockage and possible death. At least 20% of the cats returned or rescued in 2016 needed urinalyses which often indicated the need for a prescription diet.

Also this year, several cats required unusual and costly procedures before they could be adopted into forever-homes. A few of those cats are highlighted below.

When rescued, **Cutie’s** right eyes appeared smaller than the other. A visit to an ophthalmologist determined that she was blind in one eye. Prior trauma had caused the eye lashes on one eye to grow into the eyeball. Entropion surgery corrected the structure of the eyelid alleviating the terrible discomfort and constant rubbing of the lashes against the eyeball.



Heather was found on a West Virginia riverbank—a site where unwanted cats are commonly abandoned. An initial exam revealed a severe heart murmur making her a high risk for any procedure using anesthesia. An echocardiogram revealed no structural damage or need for medication. With time, in the safety of a foster home, Heather’s abandonment anxiety subsided as did her heart murmur.



A local shelter desperate for help, contacted 4Paws about **Celeste** just hours after her arrival. Her eye horribly infected, injured, painful, and bulging. After surgical removal, 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.

At 4Paws, our rescued cats, routinely

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.