



ANIMAL TALK

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PO Box 14956, Portland, OR 97293

Could Your Pets Become Homeless? Don't Let it Happen!

We often hear from family and friends, "Your work helping animals is wonderful, but where do you find all these homeless cats?" That's a good question. Fortunately, it's relatively rare to find a stray dog these days, but homeless cats seem to be everywhere. Usually a Good Samaritan finds the cats and contacts us for help, and we never find out how they came to be homeless. It's heartbreaking to think of the cats being lost or abandoned, but much sadder are the cases where an owner dies or becomes incapacitated and the pets are left to fend for themselves.

Nobody enjoys thinking about the possibility, but if you died suddenly, do you know what would become of your pets? What about close friends or family members who have pets and become unable to care for them? Would you know what to do? Of course you could provide food, water, and shelter for immediate needs, but then what? We've been called to help in two situations recently that taught us some lessons, and we'd like to share them with you.

A young woman named Tracy, who lived alone, died suddenly and left behind a large number of pets. Her family was devastated. Not being experienced in caring for pets, they had no idea what to do with the animals, who were stressed and frantic at the loss of their caregiver. Tracy's friends contacted us for help. It was a difficult project because the cats escaped the house when the emergency personnel came in, and no one among friends, family, or neighbors had more than a sketchy idea about how many cats she owned, what they looked like, their personalities, or their physical condition.

Over a period of two weeks, our volunteer trapped nine cats in the yard of the empty house. There was a possibility of catching cats belonging to others, since we didn't know exactly which cats we were looking for. So we talked to the neighbors, and asked them to spread the word about our trapping project. It turned out that all nine of the cats had belonged to Tracy.

Four of Tracy's cats were adopted by her friends, while the remaining five were set to be dropped at a public shelter, where their chances for survival were minimal. Because ARCF is a small group with only a few foster homes, it's very hard for us to accept so many cats at once. But we agreed to take them in, and somehow find room. They were boarded at a vet until space opened up in a foster home, which was stressful for the cats and a strain on our budget.

Because no current medical records were available, the cats received complete exams and necessary treatments. Although they had not been groomed or treated for parasites recently, the cats were all in relatively good health, and once recuperated from their ordeal, we found them to be friendly, well-adjusted cats. Pepper has since been adopted. Misty, Truman, Ray, and Shadow are still looking for their perfect forever homes.

Tracy's friends took up a collection which covered a small portion of the boarding and veterinary expenses. Her friends believed she would have left funds dedicated to their care, because the animals were such an important part of her life. But the family didn't agree, and because it wasn't specified in her will, no donation was made from her estate. The cats will be taken care of by ARCF until their new homes are found, but it was a very stressful rescue, and could easily have ended up with these five wonderful cats losing their chance at life after Tracy's unexpected death.

We received another call about a situation similar to this one, but different in a very important way.



Top: Misty
Middle: Truman
Bottom: Pepper

Truman and Misty are closely bonded and must be adopted as a pair.

Continued on page 2 . . .

KITTY CORNER

This quarter I am happy to report that our adoption numbers have increased over the past few months! Some fantastic cats have found equally wonderful homes. Among many, Nala, the green-eyed beauty featured in our last newsletter, and her new mom enjoyed their first holiday season together. We also placed a beautiful litter of white and orange kittens, featured as Ross, Sheldon, Roo, and Heather on our website. They were lucky enough to be adopted together and are having a ball in their new home (read more about them on page 4).

Our recent successes inspire us to keep at it. For each cat that we are able to place, more cats can enter our foster homes and begin their journey to finding a permanent home. Although we are very pleased with our recent successes, we always have more cats to help. We could not have had the previous quarter's success without you, our supporters. Here are some of the ways that you can help us continue our winning streak:

* Tell your friends and family about us! They can check out our available pets on our website or see some of our additional advertising on websites like www.PetFinder.com and www.AdoptaPet.com.

* Visit us at our outreach events around town. If you see our volunteers and a foster cat or two at your favorite pet stores and neighborhood events, please come say hello.

* Volunteer to help. We can always use good foster homes, and often need help with smaller tasks like transporting cats and delivering newsletters.

* Donate! In addition to financial assistance, ARCF can always use materials such as unused toys and high quality pet food. You can also set up a long-term donation plan if you prefer.

For more info on our available cats, outreach events, or ways to volunteer or donate, please visit our website: www.pdx-petadoption.org.

And again, a big thank you goes out to all who have adopted from us and who support us throughout the year. We couldn't have such great success without you.

Pam Brooks
President and Cat Coordinator

Could Your Pets Become Homeless?

... Continued from page 1

According to his friend who called us, a man named Robert had died unexpectedly. Robert was middle-aged and in good health, but lived alone, so until he failed to show up for work, no one realized that he had passed away. Once again, a cat escaped when the emergency personnel came in. But in this case, the friend who called us also turned out to be Robert's attorney, who told us exactly what needed to be done for the cats.

Robert had left instructions on where to find his three cats' medical records, which were complete and detailed, including physical descriptions. He had also made arrangements with a trusted friend to take the cats in the event of his death, and directed that a certain amount from his estate go to her for the lifetime care of his cats. All these arrangements were in writing, witnessed, and with copies left in the care of his lawyer.

Two of the cats were still in the house, and the one who escaped had been seen by the neighbors. Our volunteer immediately took the two indoor cats to their new home with Robert's friend, and in a matter of 24 hours had trapped the outdoor cat. He was soon in his new home as well. Their veterinary records went along with them, and although these cats had also suffered the loss of their caregiver, they were quickly settled in with someone familiar to them, who had no worries about their future care.

If you haven't yet made arrangements for your pets should you become unable to care for them, now is the perfect time to do it. Especially if you live alone, or your family members don't share your devotion to animals, it's important to make your intentions very clear. Enlist someone you trust to become their caregiver, preferably someone your pets are already familiar with. Put your directions in writing, sign and date them, and leave copies with your friends, your family, your lawyer, your vet, and anyone else who needs to know. Update your vet records, and attach photos of each pet to its record. Make notes about any special needs, which pets are especially bonded to each other, and anything else their future caregivers need to know. If you can, make financial arrangements for their ongoing care.

Because ARCF doesn't have a shelter and our foster homes are usually full to overflowing, we can't promise to accept animals at a future time. But we would be glad to share our experience and advice on how to make arrangements that will provide peace of mind for you and your pets. Please contact us if you have any questions.



Top: Shadow
Bottom: Ray

A Few Tips for Choosing Your Next Best Friend

So you've decided you're ready to welcome a dog into your home. Congratulations! Now comes the hard part: Selecting a dog that matches your expectations and lifestyle. Here are a few important factors to consider:

Household activity levels: Are you looking for a couch companion or a running buddy? All dogs need daily exercise, but slow, short-legged, or flat-nosed breeds like Basset hounds, bulldogs, or pugs may not be the best choice if you want your dog to join you on runs, hikes, or strenuous games of fetch and Frisbee.

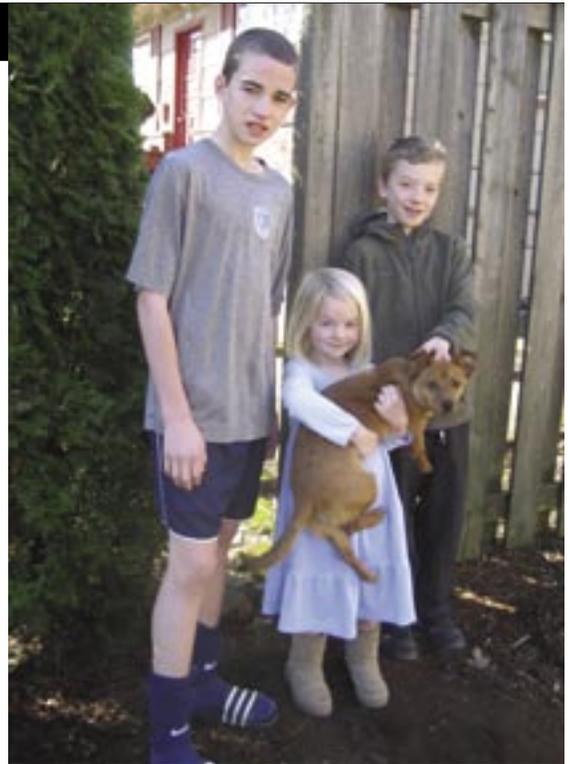
Armchair athletes may prefer a more sedentary dog who will be happy with a casual walk or play a couple times a day. Not all small dogs are lap dogs, however; many terriers, toys, and herding types of dogs are boisterous, independent, and easily bored.

Busy, active families may want to look for an energetic but easygoing dog with the temperament to tolerate lots of touching, sudden movements, noise, and social interaction. Puppies and very small or fragile dogs are not advisable for families with young children under age seven. Shy, nervous, or reserved dogs will be better suited to quiet households with predictable routines and schedules.

Space needs: Do you have a fenced yard? How much damage to your landscaping can you tolerate from digging or marking? Do you have the time for frequent walks and visits to a nearby park where your dog can play and exercise safely?

Grooming considerations: All dogs require regular grooming to stay clean and healthy. This includes regular brushing, dental care, and toenail clipping. Some dogs shed seasonally and some year-round. In addition to brushing, some long-haired dogs may need clipping or shaving to avoid mats and skin problems. Coarser and shorter dog hair can be harder to clean up than clumps of long, fine dog hair. Hairless breeds have particular skin care needs.

Time commitment: Dogs are social animals and the more time they spend interacting with their human families, the happier they will be. Feeding, training, grooming, exercising, and loving your new companion will take time and energy. Before bringing a dog into your life, take the time to do some background reading and talk to a veterinarian, a responsible dog owner, and/or a volunteer at a rescue or shelter.



(From left) Adrien, Sylvie, and Loïc Baures with their new dog, Roux, adopted from a local shelter and chosen because his energy and personality fit this young, active family. Plus he's very cute.

Animal Talk is a quarterly newsletter published by Animal Rescue & Care Fund, Inc., and printed locally.

Our Mission: To rescue, shelter, and care for homeless animals and place them in permanent, responsible homes; to promote and support spay/neuter for all companion animals.

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Animal Rescue & Care Fund, Inc., is a private, non-profit, tax-exempt corporation funded solely by private donations. A board of directors makes decisions on policy and activities. All funds are used exclusively for veterinary care, food, classified advertising to find suitable homes to place animals, and publishing the quarterly newsletter, *Animal Talk*. Volunteers provide good temporary homes until the animals are placed in responsible, permanent homes.

Animal Placements

For Nov-Dec-Jan: We placed 33 cats in loving, responsible homes. Major expenses were:

*Veterinary Fees: \$34,969.36	Advertising: \$0
**Food, Special Meds: \$424.08	Newsletter: \$1,389.00

* These expenses include veterinary care for the dogs of Portland's homeless. We also had expenses for injured and sick pets and emergency vet visits.

** Most volunteers pay for food and litter for the animals they care for as their contribution to the cause.

CAT SUCCESS STORIES

Henry & Lily

I found your website yesterday and thought you might appreciate some recent photos of two cats I adopted from ARCF in August of 2000. They are alive and well and enjoying life in Dallas, Texas.

Lily recently underwent surgery for a thyroid condition, but she is recovering nicely. Henry is, well . . . Henry. He still sings his theme song (I'm Henry the First, I Am) with the line "she got me and Lily from a Pam" – meaning Pam Brooks at ARCF.

Nancy White



Bowl of Henry



Box of Lily



Morpheus

(formerly Andy)

Andy was renamed Morpheus after the Greek god of dreams because he looks cloudlike and has a huge presence about him.

Morpheus is doing great! He was nervous for a few months, but with lots of love and patience, he is now an adoring lap cat. It took us a while but we found his "sweet spot:" the cat brush. We just hold up the brush and he will start purring

and jump into our laps. Each month brings a new degree of trust to our relationship. This month he tried sleeping on our bed, and now he doesn't want to leave. We treasure each moment and are so happy to have him in our lives.

Sue & Pete Percy

Porthos, Tiny, The Fatone, and Roo

(formerly Sheldon, Heather, Ross, and . . . Roo)

We brought these precious creatures home to live with us in December. They have brought us so much joy and love. When my husband suggested we adopt a couple cats, I had no idea he would be willing to adopt four. But we really didn't want to break up the litter, and we have not regretted it one bit.

Our older cat is not quite used to them yet, but we are working on a gradual transition. The energy they bring to our home is amazing. I can't even imagine not having all four of them.

The Fatone (pronounced "fat one") is the play instigator, attacking out of nowhere. Porthos is our lover boy. Both he and Tiny will follow us around looking for some attention. Tiny brings out the softy in both of us, but especially in Sam, who holds her in his arm like a baby. Roo is our little lady, or "Fancy Pants." She carries herself with a regal air, but looks can be deceiving: while the boys play rough, she outdoes them all in spunkiness. And yet, when all the play is done, there is not a single one who doesn't like a cuddle and belly rub. We could not be more grateful to Animal Rescue & Care Fund for bringing these little ones into our family.

Sam & Veronica Roderick



MORE CAT SUCCESS STORIES



Ollie & Pearl

(formerly Tom & Colleen)

Ollie and Pearl came into our lives a little over a year ago after a ten-year hiatus from owning pets. We have been so happy coming home to them, it's hard to leave again. Yes, we are quite taken with them and much love is given and received. Ollie loves playing with his ping pong ball in the bathtub and Pearl loves playing with Da Bird and stalking prey from the comfort of her cat tower. They are pure joy!

Marnie & Wiley



Crissy & Hana

(formerly Crissy & Anna)

The little girls have grown up a lot and have completely come to love and trust us. Even though they have their own room, they sleep on our bed. We couldn't have picked any better kitties. Crissy and Hana are the joy of our life. They are so loved and we are so blessed.

Steve & Judy Parrish

Squeaky & Kactus

(formerly Squeaky & Ben)

Squeaky and Kactus are doing great. They're having fun with their new toys and exploring around the house. Everyone who meets them agrees they are the best cats ever, and they all want to take them home. We are very lucky to have them. Thank you so much!

Carla Ikehara



Squeaky



Kactus



After, as Noel, with Terry

Noel

(formerly Connie)

ARCF:

Connie came to us last summer in very poor shape. Her skin was horribly itchy from allergies, she was infested with parasites, and she was very malnourished. In spite of being so uncomfortable, she had an irresistible, loving attitude and we knew that she deserved a very special home. By December she had recovered from all her issues, gained weight, and grown a beautiful new coat. Peggy and Terry Hauck saw her video on our website, came to meet her, and just before Christmas, Connie went to her perfect new home.

The Haucks continue:

We renamed her Noel—so fitting for the season and for filling a hole in my heart. She has settled in so well, and is so happy that she purrs and kneads all the time. She carries her mouse all over the house and meows like she is a real hunter; we love that sound. She is part of our family now, and we love our angel!

Peggy & Terry Hauck



Before, as Connie

Hyperthyroidism in Cats

By Dr. Andrea La Raus, DVM

Hyperthyroidism is one of the most common diseases affecting middle-aged and older cats. Knowing what to look for could save your cat's life.

The thyroid glands are located on the underside of the cat's neck. In hyperthyroidism, these glands enlarge, secreting an overabundance of the thyroid hormone (T4). Although the enlargement is caused by a benign condition, having too much T4 can cause many problems in nearly all of the organs in the body. Left undiagnosed or untreated, hyperthyroidism is a debilitating and ultimately fatal disease.

In its early stages, outward signs may be hard to detect (but can still be diagnosed on lab work). Progressively the most common symptom is weight loss in spite of a normal (or even greatly exaggerated) appetite. Other symptoms include vomiting, increased vocalization, hyperactivity, poor hair coat, and increased thirst and urination. Your veterinarian may also note an increased heart rate, high blood pressure, and enlarged thyroid glands.

In addition to a physical exam, blood tests are used to diagnose hyperthyroidism. Most cats will have an increased thyroid hormone (T4) level that makes the diagnosis relatively easy. Occasionally additional tests may need to be run or the cat retested a few months later to confirm the diagnosis if the initial reading is inconclusive. Your veterinarian will also evaluate other organ function, especially the kidneys and the heart. Depending on the results, further diagnostic testing may be recommended, such as measuring blood pressure and chest x-rays.

There are three treatment options for hyperthyroidism: medication, radioactive-iodine therapy, and surgery. Each has its advantages and disadvantages so this must be discussed for each patient specifically.

* Medication: Tapazole (methimazole) can be used either in an oral pill form or as a cream that is put on the hairless part of the cat's ear. When used properly, this is a highly effective treatment, but it does need to be given twice daily (in most instances) for life, can have side effects, and must be periodically monitored by lab work during treatment.

* Radioactive-iodine therapy (also called I-131) is a curative treatment. Patients need to be carefully selected for this treatment to make sure that kidney and heart functions are adequate. Special facilities administer this treatment and on average the cats remain hospitalized there for 4-7 days afterward. Once treated, cats do not need to continue on medication but do need periodic check ups and lab work.



Allie, before radioactive-iodine therapy: very thin, always hungry, dull, coarse coat.



Allie, after therapy: normal weight, regular appetite, thick and shiny coat.

* Surgery is also an option for curative treatment. While this can be highly successful, general anesthesia is necessary and there are other complications making this less common now that radioactive-iodine is more readily available.

Treating hyperthyroidism can be rewarding as even some of the most debilitated cats can respond successfully. As with most health problems, early detection is key. Annual examinations, monitoring body weight, and senior lab work (including T4 testing) are all a part of taking care of our furry friends.

Upcoming Outreach Events

March 13 12 - 3 pm

Furever Pets, 1902 NE Broadway
(second Saturday of each month at Furever Pets)

March 20 12 - 3 pm

Petco store, Jantzen Beach

We have some special all-day events scheduled for June, and need more volunteers to help staff them. If you'd like to donate a few hours of your time, please contact us at 503-284-8768 or kkiggins@aol.com.

IN MEMORIAM

Mike and Susan Phipps report the end of the Eddie era. They lost their Eddie Puss, a lovable and wacky cat adopted from ARCF eight years ago, to a congenital heart defect. He was a little bundle of energy who charmed everyone he met, and was adored by all. Eddie is also missed by his feline siblings Frankie, Dexie, and Glory.

Maryann and Keith Dunbar are mourning the loss of Setti, a beautiful gray tabby. Setti had a health problem which made it harder than usual to find her a home. She was in our foster care for two years, and then was adopted by Keith and Maryann, who gave her three years of loving care. They are missing Setti very much.



Anna Lou Lee noted the loss of her beloved cats Alex and Athena.

Stephanie Englesman lost Delphi, her soul mate in kitty form, to mammary cancer. Delphi shared Stephanie's life for eight years, including serving as co-pilot on several cross-country moves. Her spirit will always be felt by her family, who miss her deeply.

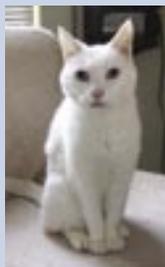
Doug Jensen is missing his elderly cat, Dribble. She was 18 years old and after a good long life, her body finally wore out.

Anna Parrish lost her beloved Walter, a faithful canine friend rescued from a hard life on the streets many years ago.

Cindy Everett recently lost her precious black and white cat, Powder. He was 12 years old, and will be deeply missed.

Tom and Chrisi Badrick said goodbye to their sweet old cat, Allie. The house is sadly quiet without her loud meow.

Randy Copenhaver lost his beloved Timmy, who was rescued as a stray about 12 years ago. Timmy had health issues most of his life, but there never was a more loving and devoted cat. Each morning he woke with his head on the pillow next to Randy, and his adoring presence is deeply missed.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Carlos and Nancy with Louie

Nancy & Carlos Chavez

Like many of us who volunteer for animal welfare organizations, Nancy Chavez was the kid in her neighborhood who collected all the stray and hungry critters she came across. She saw all that empty space in the basement, and wondered why her mom wouldn't let her start an animal shelter.

A few years ago, Nancy and her husband Carlos moved into a brand new house at New Columbia in North Portland. Shortly after that, Nancy came across a stray cat with her new litter of eight kittens. Nancy didn't know it then, but when the old Columbia Villa housing was demolished to make way for the new development, more than one hundred stray and feral cats were left behind. ARCF was involved in the huge project to capture and rehome the cats.

Nancy trapped the little family, and arranged the necessary vet care. Momcat was released back to her home area, and when the kittens were old enough, she tried to find new homes for them. After a couple months she still had six of the eight kittens. It got harder to find homes as they grew older, so she contacted ARCF for help in placing them.

By the time those kittens were placed, Nancy had discovered more homeless and abandoned cats in her neighborhood. She and Carlos learned about trap-neuter-return (TNR) from the Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon. They continued to socialize and foster kittens and cats, with help from ARCF for vet care and adoptions. Nancy records the names of all her foster cats and kittens on her garage wall, and the latest count includes thirty cats fostered and placed through ARCF.

In addition to fostering, Nancy and Carlos have spent many, many hours helping others TNR and care for their stray cats, especially senior citizens physically unable to do the work themselves. Their dedication and patience are extraordinary, and many, many Portland cats have Nancy and Carlos to thank for saving their lives.

All of us at ARCF are grateful that Nancy officially joined our group as a volunteer, and last year she was elected to the board of directors in recognition of her years of hard work for the benefit of the animals.

YES! I want to help

Animal Rescue & Care Fund, Inc., depends entirely on your donations. Our work includes rescue, medical aid, food and shelter, humane education, neutering/spaying, and more. All workers are volunteers. Your contribution goes directly to help the animals. All contributions are tax-deductible.

Make a secure online donation using a credit card, debit card, or PayPal account. Save time and postage!
Visit our website for more details, www.pdx-petadoption.org.

- I enclose _____ for humane work. (\$35 sponsors an animal, but we appreciate any amount)
 Sponsors can check here to receive a story and a photo about the animal being fostered.
 I'd like to contribute \$ _____ for the ARCF Microchipping Program, for adopted animals to have microchips.

I'm interested in being a volunteer. Please contact me at _____.

Name _____

Mail to: Animal Rescue & Care Fund, Inc.
PO Box 14956
Portland, OR 97293-0956

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

THINGS WE LIKE

Handcrafts For Pets

If you're a crafty person, or spend much time shopping online, you've probably come across www.Etsy.com, a website where crafters from all over the world can sell their lovingly handmade treasures. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of sellers who make clever and adorable goodies for pets, and we selected a few of our favorites for your shopping pleasure. To find these items, go to www.Etsy.com and search by the seller's ID. Prices are subject to change.



From LikeKittysville:
Retro/modern cat beds, modeled by Betty Bob. Choose a wooden or acrylic base, with a huge selection of vintage fabrics covering an upholstered steel frame. \$79.



From CattitudeCreations:
Handknit and felted wool cat toys, including mice of many colors and an adorable hedgehog. \$7 each.



From LuckyFiona:
The ChocoBloom handmade dog collar, many choices of fabric over thick webbing. Custom sizes, gift certificates, and matching leashes available. \$17 collar, \$28 leash.



From SmilingFrogs:
Your dog's name embroidered on his very own recycled denim squeaky ball. \$5.



From BeantownHandmade:
Dog sweater, crocheted wool/acrylic blend, 16 color choices, custom made to your dog's size. \$45.