

MEOWS TINGS

The newsletter of Thundering Paws Animal Sanctuary

Welcome!

Welcome to the winter 2008 edition of the Thundering Paws newsletter. This issue includes some happy ending adoption stories about some of our long-time resident kitties, and some happy beginning stories about our newest kittens.

Milenko Update

by Anne Zabolio

In the last newsletter, we told you the story of Milenko, a nine year old kitty who came from Town Lake Animal Center. She was in a room here with a number of other cats and she was not crazy about the situation. We sent her to our adoption venues at Petsmart, but she had no takers.

Then a former coworker who had adopted a cat from us years ago called. It seems her daughter, who was 14 when they adopted their cat (who is fine and happy with the parents), is now 23, has her masters degree, and moved into her own apartment. After she signed the lease, that said she could have a cat, she read that the cat had to be declawed. Not wanting to declaw a cat, she asked her mom to see if we had a cat who has already been declawed.

Milenko had been declawed by her former owner. Maggie, the mom, and Belle, the daughter, came over to meet Milenko and Belle loved her immediately. They took her home and when I called Maggie a few days later, she said that Milenko, whose name hadn't changed yet, has already begun crawling up into Belle's bed to sleep with

her at night. Belle is delighted, and Milenko is so happy to be an only cat. Another Thundering Paws success story, and it came from a "mistake." (You can read about the mistake that brought Milenko to us in the last newsletter.)

Holiday Gift Certificates Available

by Kay Rolfes

Wondering what to get the animal lovers on your holiday shopping list? How about making a contribution to Thundering Paws in their honor?

Contributions in any amount are welcome, and your recipient will receive an attractive card noting the gift. We can mail the card directly to your recipient, or sent it to you for stuffing into their holiday stocking. Just let us know all the address information when you arrange the contribution. Contact Thundering Paws and talk with Anne to get it all set up.



Milenko

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Carmen and Marguerite

by Anne Zabolio

A man named John called one day in a panic. A cat had shown up at his apartment complex at the same time that the landlord came over. The landlord threatened to take the cat to the kill shelter in San Marcos if John didn't "get rid" of her. (I hate that phrase!) John and his wife have four cats, with required paid deposits, in their one bedroom apartment and, as he said, they had neither the room nor the money for another one. We had just had four adoptions, and so I said he could bring her here. First, however, I always ask that the person take the cat to the vet, at their expense, to be tested for feline leukemia and FIV. John was willing to do so, the cat was negative, and she arrived at Thundering Paws that afternoon.

Carmen is a very pretty cat with a nice disposition. She is a long haired torbi – a cross between a tortoiseshell and a tabby. She is calm and friendly. She does like to chat, and often says a lot of what seem like questions, "Mraow? Raowr? Maou?" We answer her and pet her. She was featured on the Fox News Pet of the Week on Friday, December 5th. Fox News allows us that spot every first Friday of the month at 8:30 a.m.

John was happy to see that Thundering Paws is a safe place for Carmen and he went home. About an hour later, he called back. It seems that another cat whom he had not seen in quite a while, had shown up again at his apartment. He was surprised to see her and, of course, the landlord was still there with his threats. I told him to get her tested. He did. She is negative. She arrived the next day after Carmen.

Named Marguerite, this newest kitty is a short haired brown tabby with a stub of a tail and big beautiful eyes. A Manx mix, she is quiet and very fuzzy. Another nice kitty, Marguerite went on Pet of the Week in November.

Both girls are safe here for the time being, but would like new homes. They seem to have no attachment to each other and can be adopted separately.

Sophie Finds a Home

by Anne Zabolio

Years ago, a couple moved to England and their cats, Chloe and Sophie, came here. After about two years, a woman in Dripping Springs applied to adopt Chloe, who is a Siamese mix. I told the lady that Chloe was nine years old at the time. She replied, "Well, I'm 75. We can be little old ladies together." They get along very well and we are happy that Chloe got adopted to a good home.

Her companion, Sophie, stayed here. Sophie and Chloe weren't close, so we didn't insist they go together. Sophie likes everyone – dogs, cats, people. I don't believe I ever saw her hiss. She perched on a cat tree right by the front door and was a "greeter," much like you used to see in Wal-Mart, only prettier. A long haired tortoiseshell, Sophie was what we like to call a "full figured" kitty. Everyone liked her. Our youngest volunteer, seven-year old Samantha, who comes on Sundays with her mom, Stephanie, loved Sophie and would spend hours standing by Sophie's "tree," petting her. Sophie had been fostered by our volunteer, Scott, a few years ago and he always greeted her and talked with her when he was here.

One day, out of the blue, we got an application for Sophie from a woman named Deborah. I want to be sure that people who adopt cats know what they are getting, so I called Deborah and told her that her application looked great, her references said she was wonderful, and she was welcome to meet, and have,

Sophie. But, did she realize that Sophie is eleven? Yes, she did. Deborah said she had seen Sophie on the website and fell immediately in love.

When Deborah came over to meet Sophie, it was truly a match made in heaven. Deborah was polite and petted everyone else, but it was clear that she only had eyes for Sophie. Sophie obviously felt the same way. It was a Sunday and I had told Samantha that Deborah was going to come meet Sophie to maybe adopt her and I wanted Samantha to tell me if she was okay with that. Samantha checked out Deborah and said she was fine. I thought so, too. Stephanie thought so. Everyone thought so! Deborah took Sophie home.

A few days later, Scott came into town. I called Deborah and asked if we could visit Sophie in her new home. Deborah, who owns an upscale salon in SoCo, said to meet her at her salon and when we did, she took us to her nearby home. Sophie was sitting calmly on the king sized bed in a house all her own. When she saw Scott, she came over to say hello. She spoke to me, then went back to sit by her new mom. This is a phenomena I have seen many times and I always take it to mean something like, "It's so nice of you to visit my new home. I'd rather stay with this person now, thank you."

Sophie has long hair. She was pretty scruffy at Thundering Paws, but was noticeably more beautiful when we saw her at her new home. When Scott remarked on her lovely condition, Deborah said, "Of course. I'm a hairdresser."



Sophie

Feral Kittens Everywhere!

by Anne Zabolio

Another no-kill shelter, who does not have the impressive volunteer staff that we do, put out a plea for someone to tame five feral kittens. Stupidly, I said we would. These are the worst feral kittens in the world! Or, perhaps, I am the worst tamer in the world.

I am not a calm person. The good part of that is this: if a feral kitten can cope with me, he or she can deal with anyone. The bad part is that these feral kittens can't. I move too fast, I talk too loud, I wear cowboy boots. I'm only 5'1 ½" but everyone is surprised. "You're that short?" people exclaim. Okay, I'm Italian, and it shows. Anyway, these kittens are appalled at me. I don't blame them, but I wish they weren't of such delicate sensibilities.

Two of them have gone to the family of one of our volunteers and they are doing better than they were here. The other three – the Russian kittens, Natasha, Alexandra, and Kotia – are here being petted and played with by other volunteers, and being terrified by me.

They will become more tame, sooner or later, and they are calmer and happier than they were at first. This is part of the no-kill pledge of Thundering Paws. If they do not tame enough to be adopted, they have a place to comfortably live out their lives.



Kotia and Natasha

Whole Lotta Trapping Going On

by Anne Zabolio

Calene Summers, our board member and black belt cat trapper, told me she had appointments for four cats for a given day to be spayed/neutered. I had complained to her that there were now some feral cats on our street. She brought me traps and told me when to set them. I sucked it up all afternoon with a mantra: "I told Calene I'd trap some cats. I told Calene I'd trap some cats. I told Calene I'd trap some cats."

Trapping cats is stressful. The traps are bunglesome and the bait has to be stinky to attract the attention of the prey, as it were. One has to schlepp these heavy metal devices into wooded areas where they can't be seen from the road. It's best to do it around dusk. I am not an evening person. Then you catch a cat and all hell breaks loose! You have to cover the trap with an old sheet, which you then trip over carrying the heavy thing full of freaking out cat back through the woods to your vehicle, in which you fervently hope the cat will not make a mess. You can tell that trapping is not my forte.

But I told Calene I'd trap some cats and, by gum, I was going to do it! I got out the traps. I got out the sardines. I got out the old sheets. I scouted out the area. Luckily, I had my cell phone on me when wonderful Calene called and offered to

come over and help me. I blubbered thank yous all over her on the phone.

You know, I still had to deal with heavy, smelly traps in the dark cold woods going out; heavy, smelly traps full of hysterical cats covered with trailing sheets in the dark cold woods coming back, but it was oh so much easier knowing that Calene was waiting for me in her truck. It's just easier with a friend.

Calene just brought them back, both neutered – Puck and Harold. Harold is gorgeous and may well be interested in becoming tame (even with me taming him!) Puck would be gorgeous without the snarl on his face and the hissing, lunging, and growling emanating from his carrier. I don't think he is interested in becoming tame with me or anyone up to and including the Dali Lama. Whatever they choose to do after their stay at Chez Thundering Paws, they won't be creating kittens, and that's great.

Thank You

by Anne Zabolio

Maybe there is no such thing as saying this enough: Thank you! Thank you for being volunteers. Thank you for donating money. Thank you for reading this newsletter. Thank you for caring about animals. Thank you for being part of the dream of a bunch of crazy cat people. Thank you for all the animals you have rescued, or helped along the way. Thank you for making the world a kinder, softer and sillier place in which to live. May your holiday season, whatever you celebrate, or don't, be a happy, healthy one and may your New Year bring you everything your heart desires. Be happy. The only consequence I have ever noticed from a decision to live a happy life is just this: more happiness. I wish that for all of you.

Let me say it again, because it's fun: Thank you!

Newsletter Contributors

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Our Direct Deposit Form

Won't you let us draft \$7.14 (the cost of keeping one cat in food and litter) or more from your bank account monthly, using the form below? In this way we are building an operating budget. It takes close to \$6000 a month to run the sanctuary. How we come up with it is miraculous! To do so, we wrack nerves which could better be used to save animals. So please become one of our regular contributors. You will save many, many lives.

Thundering Paws

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Authorization for Direct Deposit (ACH Deposit) of Monthly Donations

I authorize ***Thundering Paws Animal Sanctuary*** to initiate variable* entries into my account described below:

Account Number _____ Checking _____ or Savings _____

Name and address of Bank, Credit Union, or other financial institution _____

Name on Account _____ Telephone (____) _____

Address _____

Amount \$ _____ Draft funds on the 5th of the month _____ or the 20th of the month _____.

Signature _____ Date _____

This authority is to remain in full force and effect until Thundering Paws Animal Sanctuary has received written notification from an authorized individual of its termination in such time and manner as to afford Thundering Paws a reasonable opportunity to act upon it.

Please attach a voided check.

* The word "variable" in this instance pertains to the ability of Thundering Paws Animal Sanctuary to draft monies out of the above account and, if a cancellation order is received after a monthly draft has been taken, to refund that donation back into the account.

To cancel this authorization, please send a copy of this form with the word "CANCEL" prominently written across it to the above address.

Thundering Paws Animal Sanctuary thanks you for your tax deductible donations. You will receive a yearly summary of your donations in January.