

PAWPRINTS

The Newsletter of the Lethbridge PAW Society

AN
ADOPTION
IN THIS ISSUE!

Number 172 ~ December 2025

Plenty of Baking, Plenty of Sales

A sunny, cool day was the perfect time for the PAW Society's Autumn Bake Sale, on November 22nd. Unlike the 2024 sale, held almost exactly a year before, there was no snow, either coming down or already on the ground, to discourage customers (not that last year's customers were much discouraged!) from visiting PAW's tables.

"It was a great day, and went quickly," stated Audrey Audette, treasurer of the Society, and the Executive Board member who took over management of the sale this year. "Our location right at the mall entrance was perfect. There was lots of traffic in and out of Lammle's



There was less merchandise on offer than in previous sales, but it nonetheless sold well.



The presentation of the baked goods was inviting.

Western Wear and most who shop there use that entrance. It's also helpful when there's an ATM right around the corner. "

It appeared that the number of people coming into the mall at the entrance in front of the sale's tables was continual.

The amount of baked donations was very impressive and passed, in this writer's estimate, that of the recent sales. The number of people baking, and the quantity,

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The Lethbridge PAW Society

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Plenty of Baking, Plenty of Sales *(continued)*

meant the tables were filled, providing a great variety for customers.

In terms of numbers, baking and merchandise sales combined to bring in **\$1,233.25**. Added to this is a \$100 donation, and \$375 in calendar sales (25 calendars) - our fund-raising events are important venues for selling the calendars. This made a total for the day of **\$1,708.25**.

This revenue would not have been possible without those who baked the delicious products for the sale. Thanks must go as well to those who worked as staff at the sale; this was indeed a collaborative effort. And PAW's gratitude goes as well to the Society's supporters, those who bought the pastries and breads and cookies. PAW exists because of such people. Thank you!



The PAW Society's time to work at the **Lethbridge Casino** is scheduled! It is for **June 26 & 27, 2026**. We will need 18 volunteers for the various duties on those two days. This is the biggest fundraiser we have, and the revenue it generates is vital for what we do. Please consider volunteering, and contacting PAW as soon as possible, by email (pawsociety@shaw.ca) or by leaving a message at our telephone number (403.328.6700).



PAW 
2026
Calendar
and
Feline Business Directory!

\$15

*Thank you for supporting
our calendar fundraising*

Helping homeless cats in Southern Alberta since 1999



THE PAW SOCIETY'S 2026 CALENDAR MAKES A THOUGHTFUL CHRISTMAS GIFT!

The 2026 calendar would be a wonderful Christmas gift: useful to the recipient, thoughtful on the part of the giver, and helpful to cats in need!

The calendar may be purchased for \$15 from **Homes Alive Pets, The Jasmine Room, Analog Books and Highlands Pet Hospital**. They may also be purchased - by appointment - from one of our Executive Board members (please record a message to that effect on the PAW telephone line at 403.328.6700, if you would like this option.)

The Ambassador Retires

Duke passed away on November 24th, 2025. He was seven and a third years old.

Duke had served as the PAW Society's ambassador-at-large almost his entire life, though he took on the role officially only later on. He was that natural in it.



Infant Duke

It's likely that everyone in PAW knew of Duke, many had met him, and many who were not members of the Society would have pleasant memories of him. He was well-loved and well-remembered.

His story did not begin simply. His pregnant mother was already in PAW's care when she gave birth, on July 25th, 2018. As sometimes happens with new feline mothers, she felt the stress of an unknown event and reacted to it by severely injuring Duke when he was just ten days old. His throat was slashed.

What could have been a very short life was saved by the quick action of his foster-parents, Teresa and her son Donovan, and by immediate advice from Audrey Audette, co-founder and treasurer of PAW. But Dr Kristen Gibson, of Highlands Pet Hospital, who performed the high-risk surgery to repair the damage, was not sure that Duke was old enough even to survive the anaesthetic. There was, however, no choice. Duke survived.

His tribulations certainly weren't over. He was too tiny for the stitches required to close his wound to stay in place. Instead, a gauze 'body-suit' was fashioned for him. This had to be changed daily, while his wound was very carefully cleansed with a saline solution.

It was hoped that his mother would nurse her little son - during very closely supervised visits - but she

refused. Teresa and her son, Donovan, had to feed Duke by syringe, and at night, the miniscule patient slept in his carrier - snuggled against his toy-companion, a little cow - next to Teresa.

Astonishingly, Duke had to spend only "seven or eight days in the body-suit," Teresa reported. "He healed very fast."

This helped form a bond among Duke, and his two humans, and Teresa and Donovan adopted him while he was still a kitten.

He grew into an interesting fellow, a description that starts with his name. Because he was initially living with his mother in the lower of a pair of big, stacked kennels, the new arrival was named the Duke of Lower Kennelton. If he does not give himself aristocratic airs, he is certainly full of the confidence enjoyed by the nobility.

Duke commenced his most characteristic activities as early as August 25th, 2018, when he was put into a harness for the first time for an outside journey. Stopping in at the downtown Lethbridge Homes Alive pet-supply

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Duke was ready to take on life even following his early injury.

**Please consider volunteering for PAW's night
at the Casino: June 26th and 27th, 2026.**

The Ambassador Retires *(continued)*



Duke, with leash and harness, on an outing.

shop, he became popular, and visits frequently, often coming in riding on Donovan's shoulder.

Until very recently, he made appearances at many fund-raisers. He was well used to being petted and fawned over, having become accustomed to the human touch when he needed to be fed, washed and dried as a kitten.

Teresa and Donovan would explain Duke's association with PAW to his admirers. He could often be seen dressed in natty attire, and was sometimes the first introduction of members of the public to cat-rescue. Duke made his



Duke had his opinions on why people should help cat-rescue...

human's explanation of the idea and its processes easy.

Teresa described Duke as helpful when introducing new foster-cats. Indeed, he usually became their uncle, making them feel comfortable in their new surroundings, and teaching kittens the ways of being a cat.

"He doesn't hiss or spit, and makes every new cat welcome," Teresa said at one time.



An imaginative wardrobe helped Duke catch the public's eye.

Duke was particularly suited for the job of PAW's envoy to the world not just for his friendly demeanour and out-going personality. He had what might be considered more than his share of afflictions, which became opportunities to teach the public about various aspects of feline health.

In late 2023, Teresa and Donovan noticed signs that Duke's mouth was in trouble. They were right: he had stomatitis, and of such a severity that it was

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Have a lasting memorial to Duke: his final photographs are part of the new 2026 PAW Society calendar.

The Ambassador Retires *(continued)*



recommended that all his teeth be removed, a drastic but sometimes necessary action to curb stomatitis. Though it took him some time to adjust to being toothless, Duke achieved this and began living his extraordinary life once more.



Donovan (centre) with Duke on his shoulder, with Roxanne Holloway, PAW's president, and a trio of young entrepreneurs.

But Duke's toughest health danger was feline leukemia (FeLV), which he contracted in 2024 through an accidental exposure. Though some cats with this disease live almost normal life-spans, this was not going to be the case with Duke. He did well for quite a while, but eventually succumbed. Teresa and Donovan had to say good-bye to him on November 24th, 2025. Teresa wished to commend the staff at Ranch Docs Veterinary Services, saying that they could not have been more kind and compassionate when Duke departed.

There will not be another like Duke. His gregariousness, warmth and adventurous spirit not only gained him friends wherever he went, but spread the word about cat-rescue and rescued cats. People learned from him. His openness to new cats in his residence made their foster experience easy, aiding in integration and, if needed, socialization.

The PAW Society is indebted to its ambassador, and will miss him greatly in his retirement.



**See all the cats who were adopted from the Society in 2025
in the next issue of PAWPrints.**

Luna: Stories in the Making

ADOPTION

Though most people who adopt cats have had cats in their pasts, Erika has the distinction of her first two cats coming from a feral colony. Juveniles, they socialized easily; her third cat was also a feral. Her fourth was a “funny little duck”, whom Erika realized when she took her in had been parted from her mother far too early. Erika and her husband, Devin, were therefore no strangers to taking care of a variety of cats.



Luna

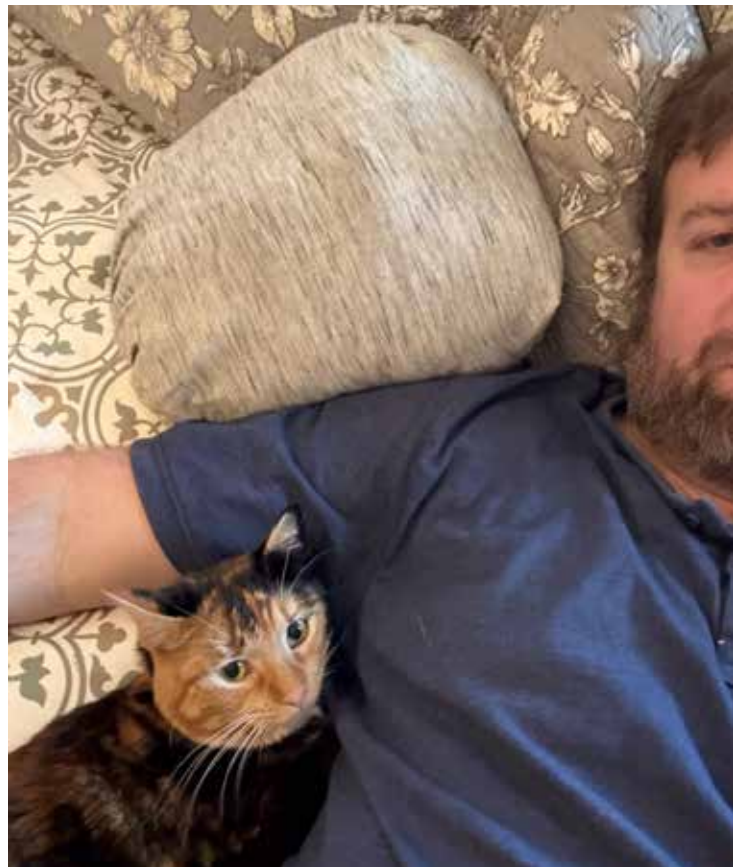
But human family life intervened, and they knew that the earliest years of a young family were not perhaps the best time to take on the responsibility of a pet. But their three children were now ten and five (a boy and brother/sister twins), and were talking about having a pet. Having a dog “wasn’t where we are in life” right now, so it was decided upon a cat. It was not a rapid decision, however; thought was given to it for some months, and the family discussed responsibilities over the summer.

Erika’s sister had volunteered with PAW years before, and Erika herself knew Roxanne Holloway, the Society’s president and adoption counsellor from some time ago, so it was to PAW that the family turned for a new addition.

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Luna and Erika



Luna and Devin

**Would you like to provide a foster-home for a newly-rescued cat?
Contact the PAW Society to learn more.**

Luna: Stories in the Making *(continued)*



*Luna and Ayden,
just after the cat-tree was assembled*

Lola lived in her foster-home with other cats, and even played with a couple of them, but it was clear she would prefer to be the only feline. That suited Erika and Devin, and, aside from being “beautiful”, they thought that a tortoiseshell’s ‘tortitude’ would serve her well with children.

The timing was perfect. A teacher’s strike kept Ayden, the older boy, home, so that for four weeks, there was always a human in the house to interact with Lola, now re-named Luna. The result was as perfect as the timing.

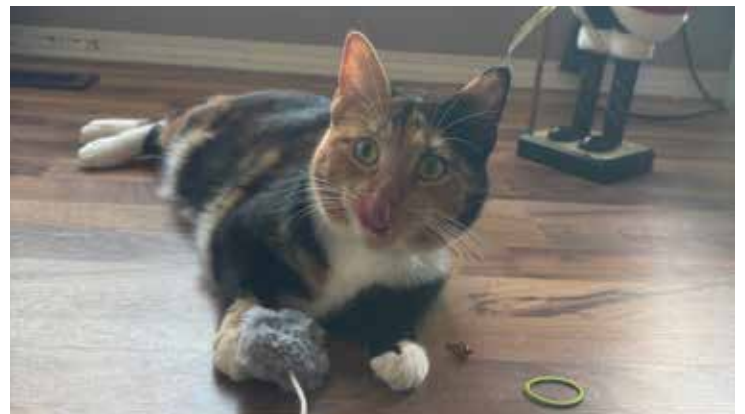
“We all adore her,” Erika stated, while Ayden proclaimed Luna, “the best cat!” The feelings are reciprocated, as Ayden’s mother said that Luna loves him.



“She grooms him like a baby kitten,” she added, putting her front legs around his head. Luna usually starts bedtime with an hour next to Ayden; she spends most of the night sleeping on or next to Erika’s feet. This may be a mixed blessing, as she sometimes wakes her new people with head-bumps at three o’clock. But at five, she is up with Erika and Devin to begin the day.

“She doesn’t mind the hustle and bustle of a young family,” not being bothered by noise and fuss. She simply watches everyone going about their business. Luna’s day is often spent napping, of course, on Ayden’s bed or in the basket of her cat-tree (temporarily displaced by a Christmas tree).

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**To learn who is available for adoption from the PAW Society,
visit our newly upgraded website at pawsociety.ca**

Luna: Stories in the Making *(continued)*



Luna and Quinn

Luna seems fully to have adopted the whole family. While she spends a great deal of time with Ayden, she shows her affection and approval for everyone. She likes nibbling Devin's bare feet - no one else's - and enjoys the company of the twins, daughter Quinn, who likes fussing over Luna - to whom she's given a range of nicknames - and son Easton.

Luna isn't always passively receiving love, however.



Luna and Easton

She is entertained by strings and string-toys, and is the stereotypical cat when it comes to making the bed. Feather toys - or just feathers - are great fun, as are empty boxes, of course, especially shoe-boxes with their tissue paper contents.

When the Christmas tree was set up, there was some worry over how Luna would behave with it. But experience with cats in the past have put the tree on a table and, though Luna looks ready to battle the ornaments from time to time, she focusses her attention instead on a toy train set included in the decorations.



Each day, Luna waits near the door for the family to come home, rubbing up against them when they do. (She's a great "leg-rubber", it's reported.) Then it's time for Luna to have more fun with her humans, to create stories for them to tell.

"She gives us lots of stories," said Erika, "every day."



**Read about a new adoption
in next month's issue!**

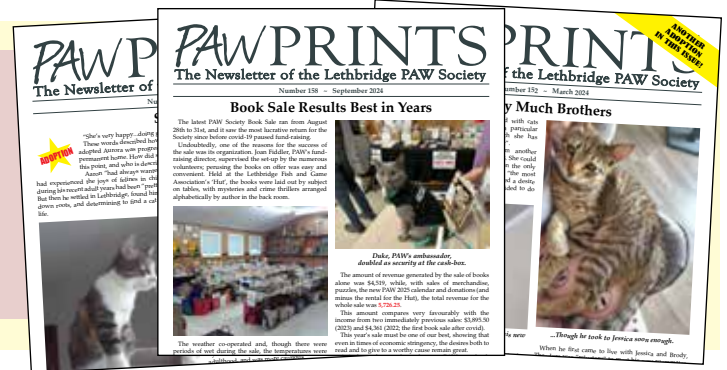
Who's New to PAW

SUNNY

We're unsure of Sunny's age; she is small and delicate enough to be a kitten, but there are signs that she may be as old as a year. We'll know later. What we know right now is that she lives up to her new name. Despite being another abandoned cat, she is happy and trusting. At the veterinary hospital for her initial examination, she went from one new person to another, rubbing up against them and purring constantly. She wasn't afraid of anything and that's carried on into her foster-home, where she has made friends with the other cats.



Do you enjoy reading PAWPrints but think you missed an issue? Our archives contains an electronic copy of each issue. If you would like one sent to you, please let us know.



Editorial: A Bittersweet Christmas

As we come to another Christmas, as we complete another year, we at the PAW Society see that it has been one of mixed emotions. In September, we lost Joan Fiddler, our very devoted fund-raising director. Though her colleagues were able to carry on her invaluable work, there is no replacing her as a member of the Society or, of course, as a unique human being.

Also, the Society's popular and loved ambassador, Duke, died, in late November. His family in particular is agrieved at this time.

But, while the year may beat and buffet us, Christmas is about re-birth, and about hope; optimism embodied, I believe, in cat-rescue. This may be seen in our adoptions. They were slow through much of 2025, but this past twelvemonth is, at least in this aspect, ending well, with several adoptions completed and two pending, even as I write this.

One adoption specifically affects me, as I have decided to add to my problems by keeping Moxy as one of my own cats. Moxy is, in fact, a very easy-going fellow; I have chosen the smoothest adoption for myself. Moxy gets along with other cats so well that he's been dubbed the Mixer, for his sociability. He

has become friends with several of the felines in my household and has made the transition of my feral cat, Sable, as pleasant (for both her and others) as possible.

So, as frequently is the case, the closing year contained both good and bad, even if the bad was very bad, indeed. We look forward and upward as each year ends, forward to a better time to come, and upward for the better behaviour mankind has the chance to exhibit.

I think cat-rescue, and animal-rescue in general, provides a glimpse of the good that can result from people doing the right and proper thing. Those who have died this year are examples of those right and proper actions: much of Joan's life was dedicated to cat-rescue, and Duke's life was saved and uplifted by cat-rescue.

So, while remembering the tribulations of the recent past, I nonetheless choose to view Christmas, this Christmas in particular, with hope and optimism. May your Yuletide, and the new year that follows it, be filled with the justification of that hope and optimism.

Merry Christmas!

~ James Thorne.

The staff of PAWPrints wishes all its readers a happy Christmas and the best of new years.