

PAW PRINTS

The Newsletter of the Lethbridge PAW Society

Number 163 ~ March 2025

Taking a Closer Look

Sometimes, in animal-rescue and pet-adoption, the most newsworthy item is that there is no news. That is what the staff of *PAWPrints* has found this month. And in this case, no news is not good news.

The PAW Society has had just two adoptions in almost ten months.

A Global News report from November, 2019, found that both cat and dog adoptions had risen through 2018.

“Humane Canada, an organization that represents SPCAs and humane societies, found that 47 per cent of dogs and a record 62 per cent of cats living in shelters were adopted last year.”

The organization’s annual report was based on a survey of 87 Canadian animal shelters and seven foster facilities.

Compare that to the current situation. A CTV News report from January of this year described the animal-shelter situation in Montreal, which is very likely comparable to elsewhere in Canada.

“In 2024 we had a record year in terms of admission,” said Montreal SPCA Executive Director Laurence Masse. “We received more animals than in the past five years.” Masse went on to say that, though the situation is accentuated by “the fallout of pandemic impulse adoptions”, many people feel that they cannot afford to keep their pets.

“What we noticed is behind every surrender this year we see a financial reason,” she said, adding that on average it costs \$2,400 a year to take care of a cat.

While the amount may vary depending on what part of Canada one lives in, that cost must be increased by medical bills, which can overtake the routine costs by many times. The expenses of caring for a pet have expanded tremendously, along with other of life’s expenses.

Add to this the fact that many rental properties don’t allow pets or allow them only on payment of fines (‘pet fees’), and there is a real, financial reason for slow adoptions.

But this article is not about finances. It’s about cats; specifically, the cats the PAW Society has for adoption that some may not consider upon learning more about them.

Why would greater knowledge of these loving animals decrease their chances of finding homes? Some in PAW’s care have issues - medical, behavioural - that limit their appeal.

Let’s take a closer look at some of the Society’s available cats, and why people may not consider them as family members.



Brazil

Continued on next page



The Lethbridge PAW Society

Website: www.pawsociety.com • Email: pawsociety@shaw.ca

Tel: 403-328-6700 • P.O. Box 255, Lethbridge, Alta., Canada, T1J 3Y5



Taking a Closer Look *(continued)*

Brazil. He's a loving fellow who is very shy. We mean very shy. His foster-guardian saw little more than Brazil's tail for weeks after he first arrived: it would be all that was visible when Brazil hid in a closet, whenever the foster-guardian entered his same-room. It took almost two months before he would consent to be touched, and then only at meal-times, when he started expressing his gratitude for the meal's preparation.

Months later, he could be touched and petted. Learning to play with his human and among the other cats was a big step forward. He now interacts with the other cats in his foster-home, and plays strenuously with two of them.

Nonetheless, creating trust will take time, and plenty of it. Understandably, people want a cat who will be a friend, a part of their family, not a ghost seen out of the corners of their eyes. Brazil *will* be what everyone wants in a cat, but it will require a lot of time.



Jerome

Jerome. Big, hefty loveable Jerome. He is huge for a cat. His weight has decreased somewhat, but that is hard to accomplish in a multi-cat household. Even so, that is the only reason he is in this article. He is loving and friendly, filled with energy, despite his size, and filled with endearing characteristics. His heart is in proportion to his size, and he loves his people.



Indigo

Indigo. Few, it seems, want to adopt a diabetic cat. It's true that she will require insulin, probably for the remainder of her life. She was also diagnosed with pancreatitis. Though she shows no signs of that currently, it's something that must be considered. Indie doesn't care for the usual 'curves' necessary for periodic examination of her diabetes treatment, but a quick visit to the veterinary hospital for a fructosamine test will solve that. She doesn't get along with her feline roommates, and would thrive as an only-cat. Yet she loves her human and daily asks to be on his lap. At night, she will lie on the bed, very close to her person, and purr.

Rosie was the subject of an article in last month's *PAWPrints* regarding her allergies, so details need not be given here. She requires the drug Atopica. It's rather expensive, but allows her to be a happy, playful cat.



Rosie

Continued on next page

The PAW Spring Bake Sale is coming up, April 26th (see page 4) and the Book Sale, June 11th to 14th. Please consider volunteering.

Taking a Closer Look *(continued)*



Katia

Katia. Very shy, one could say only partially socialized, due to the emotional trauma she suffered when she was initially captured (not by PAW). She is close to her brother, Mordecai, and mother, Cassie. Mordecai is very adoptable, and Cassie is on her way there, but Katia needs a great deal of patience and care, like Brazil.

Don't think these cats are not adoptable. They are. But they require special circumstances: time or vigilance, understanding or special medicine. The PAW Society would certainly welcome inquiries into any of our available cats. No cat is more deserving than another of a loving home. But some have fewer chances of that home than others, and if someone wanted to reduce those chances by adoption, or even by spreading the word about these lovely cats, the Society would not be displeased.

<http://www.pawsociety.com/available.html>

Lethbridge PAW Society

BAKE SALE

Saturday, April 26, 2025

10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Centre Village Mall

1240, 2nd Avenue 'A' North

BAKING NEEDED!

**Drop off donated baking at the Mall's Main Concourse
the day of the sale, between 9:30 and 11:00 a.m.**

Call Joan: 403.732.5708

Website: pawsociety.com



PAW's fund-raising director, Joan Fiddler, and volunteer, Rita, will be at the Coalhurst Spring Market, Saturday, March 29th, from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. The market will be at the Community Centre (527, 50th Avenue, Coalhurst). PAW Merchandise, including items from an estate sale, will be on offer. Drop by if you have a chance.

Editorial: What They Deserve

While this issue's editorial might seem similar to the one in the immediately previous issue, it's a bit different. That one discussed how cat-rescue sometimes means thinking hard and working hard to help a cat overcome her difficulties. This one is about the cat whose difficulties cannot be overcome. This is about helping him live with them.

It periodically occurs that a rescued cat has an issue that won't improve. It may be due to temperament, but often it is something physical, something that is permanent, such as blindness. These are often the cats who are overlooked, like those in our front page story. Neville was one.

Neville is a 'sanctuary cat', a permanent-foster. He won't be adopted because of his physical ailments. Initially, it was his unmanageable diabetes. Now, be assured that diabetes can be managed, and is, in almost all cases. It may take a while to determine the right programme - dosage, frequency, etc. - but it can be managed. Rarely, it cannot. Neville's cannot.

He also has hyperthyroidism. This is a new development, for which he is given Methimazol. It is applied trans-dermally; that is, rubbed into the skin of the inside of his ears.

And now, he is old. He is estimated to be sixteen.

What is the point of this editorial? To state that though some cats have issues that they will not overcome - and Nev will of course not overcome age - they still deserve happy and loving homes.

Of course people know this. But it is not always an easy transition from theoretical to practice. Neville was not old when I took him in, and there was an expectation that, despite his diabetes, he could be adopted. He was and is friendly, quiet, stable, with his own personality that has never looked for trouble. He is a good companion. He was never adopted.

He has grown older, and, though he can still move

about quite well on his own, managing stairs and even cat-trees, he is wobbly from time to time and, now and then, has trouble exiting a litter-box. He doesn't groom himself much, and therefore is subjected, reluctantly, to having his long hair shaved twice a year, as it mats rather often.

The long hair, the lack of grooming, the unsteady gait, the periodic clumsiness in the litterbox can lead to a bit of a mess being created. Just a few days ago, I had to spend half an hour cleaning his nether regions with a comb, scissors, a wash-cloth and warm water.

When we ask people to adopt such cats, why on Earth would anybody do so? After all, this would be adoption, and not rescue.

Adoption is different than rescue. People quite rightly want a fun, entertaining companion who is not going to take up all their free time with work. But such cats as Neville nonetheless deserve adoption.

Some day - rather too soon - I will be the equivalent of Neville's age. I suspect that I will have health problems I do not have now; chronic issues for which medicine will be prescribed. I may be uncertain on my feet. My grooming may suffer, and maybe even some more delicate aspects of hygiene will be neglected.

But I am selfish enough to think that I will still deserve dignity and care. So, too, does Neville.

There may come a time when the negative overwhelms the positive in his life. Yet I know he is currently content; he loves his chin-rubs and his food, though he eats less of it than he once did. He still purrs. Keeping him clean, giving him a meal when he's hungry instead of waiting for dinner-time, washing the floor because his aim isn't always true; these are small things compared to making an old cat feel good. I do these things because Neville deserves it.

And because one day, I will be Neville.

~ James Thorne.

Editor's Note: the staff of PAWPrints welcomes all comments regarding this and past issues, and suggestions for the benefit of future issues.