

CATS AND DOGS

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO COMPANION ANIMALS



Lilith needs a Santa – Page 7
West Michigan Ferret Connection



Sushi needs a home.
Page 18



Jean Briggs
Caring for Feral Cats – Page 17



Jasmine

Jasmine needs a home.
Bunnies-R-Us – Page 12

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CATS AND DOGS

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Great Lakes Golden Retriever Rescue celebrates 20 years

By Jane Urbanski

It wasn't quite like the renowned event in Scotland that drew almost 500 Golden Retrievers and their owners this past July to celebrate the anniversary of the breed's founding in 1868. But there were still about 50 people and 15 Golden Retrievers and Golden mixes celebrating the Great Lakes Golden Retriever Rescue's 20th birthday on Sept. 10.

Happy, kind-hearted Golden Retrievers adopted from the Grand Rapids-based rescue and their pet parents met up with foster parents, some of the rescue's interviewers, board members and other supporters at John Ball Park's Hilltop Pavilion. They enjoyed lunch, a silent auction, sales of hand-made, pet-related items, fun and fellowship.

"We really wanted to focus on the gratitude we have for our adopters, and all the volunteers that have made up GLGRR," said board member Jenna Medendorp. "We truly are a family, and I was hopeful that this event would spark up that comradery again."

And it did. Some attendees were delighted to see dogs they had fostered months or years ago, now in their forever homes. One couple who had adopted two puppies were surprised to see the puppies' mom—now with her new owner—who they hadn't seen in two years. And others were grateful to see that dogs who had had rough starts when they came into the rescue were now flourishing.

Bonnie and Maury Mahieu had adopted Angel, a cream-colored Golden who had been used as a breeding dog.

"We're not sure how old she was, but the breeder just didn't want her anymore," Bonnie said. She and Maury explained how Angel wasn't very socialized or affectionate

at first, but with time and love and patience, she is now very social and gets along easily with her Weimaraner mix and Yorkie mix siblings.

Over just the past five years, GLGRR has adopted out 166 Golden Retrievers. Many of those were dogs transferred in from the country of Turkey through a special program started in 2017 to bring over abandoned and abused Golden Retrievers for a chance at a forever home. In Turkey, there are thousands of abandoned dogs who are left to fend for themselves on the streets, beaches and forests. GLGRR was one of many organizations throughout the country that stepped up to help and rescue their favorite breeds. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19 and new regulations, that program has been put on hold.

In addition to the event, GLGRR will continue its birthday celebration with the publication of a special 20th anniversary book.

"The book will celebrate 20 years of rescuing hundreds of Golden Retrievers, 20 years of an incredible volunteer team and 20 years of amazing families adopting these wonderful Golden Retrievers," Medendorp said. "We have experienced a lot over 20 years, but one thing that has remained consistent over these years is the love the entire GLGRR community has for our beloved Golden Retrievers. It has been such an honor to help so many Golden Retrievers and bring so much joy to so many families."

Adopters, fosters and volunteers have been asked to submit their favorite stories and photos for the book. GLGRR also publishes a yearly calendar to celebrate and raise money for the Golden Retrievers. The addition of a special anniversary book this year will be an extra way to honor all the rescue's Golden Retrievers, volunteers, adopters, GLGRR's history and future.

To learn more about GLGRR, the calendar, anniversary book, and how to volunteer or donate, visit greatlakesgoldens.org or Facebook.



Adopters, fosters, volunteers and supporters of the Great Lakes Golden Retriever Rescue celebrate the group's 20th birthday.

Cannonsville Critters Newsletter



We are still taking Medical Emergencies while doing this hoard. We have had more emergencies this year than in the past. We are overwhelmed but committed to helping these kitties have a better life.. We can not do this without you. Thank you to everyone who continually supports our Mission.

Friday with an eye Injury...



On top of hoards, kittens and abandoned kitties – we still have medical emergencies and surgeries! Eye Surgeries for Panda, Tippy & Friday. Just \$5.00 helps save lives !!



Picture of Bojangles with a jaw injury...



Our Sweet "Babs" with a leg injury...

Over 620 Spray/Neuters this year So FAR !!!!! and 3 months to go..!

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West Michigan Ferret Connection needs your help

By Dee Gage
Founder and Director of West Michigan Ferret Connection

I will always maintain, "A dog or cat may steal your heart, but a ferret will steal your soul."

October 2023 marked 22 years since the West Michigan Ferret Connection began advocating for ferrets in Michigan by taking in unwanted ferrets, re-homing ferrets and educating the public. With two months left in 2023, 67 ferrets have been surrendered so far. We have re-homed 33 ferrets, and there are currently 60 ferrets in the shelter. Many of these ferrets are unadoptable due to their age and/or health issues.

Twenty-three years is a long time for any rescue. In the ferret community, most, if not all rescues operate on a shoestring budget, usually out of members of the group's own pockets. Ferret rescues don't receive any funding or grant money from foundations like the PETCO Love, Petfinder Foundation or the Bissell Pet Foundation.

Ferret rescues don't qualify for neuter/spay programs because the majority of ferrets are pet store ferrets, bred by Marshall Farms, the largest ferret mill/factory in the United States. This industry spays their "product" at 3-5 weeks of age.

Amazon Smile was a great means to fundraise for ferret rescues for a number of years but Amazon cancelled that program in 2022. That hurt.

For the West Michigan Ferret Connection, I have only three fundraisers. One is my birthday fundraiser on Facebook (July). Another is Giving Tuesday (Nov. 28) and my favorite ... the Ferret Giving Tree.

The Ferret Giving Tree was started in 1998 by Kris Newton. The goal was to give ferrets who were in shelters a chance for some special Christmas gifts as well as help the shelter operators with needed funds and supplies. In the first year there were 380 ferrets on the Giving Tree. Registered shelters can post details about their operation as well as their vet information. Each ferret has a bio, a wish list and a photo posted on the tree.

**Please consider being a Santa to the ferrets at
West Michigan Ferret Connection.**

www.FerretGivingTree.com

Select West Michigan Ferret Connection from the dropdown menu. Or look on Trees 6 and 7 for photos of WMFC's ferrets who need Santas.

West Michigan Ferret Connection

Email Us: wmfc2001@att.net

Website: www.westmichiganferretconnection.com

PayPal Donations: ddmgage@att.net

Amazon Wish List: yes

Online Donations: CashApp \$WestMIFerretC

Some of the ferrets needing a Santa



Sadie and her sister, Gracie, were surrendered in 2020.



In 2020, a Good Samaritan found Cherry wandering around a trailer park in northern Michigan. Her age is unknown. She is deaf and seems to have neurological issues, but she's happy.



Lilith was surrendered in 2020 along with a cage mate when she was 4 years old. Her friend crossed the Rainbow Bridge that June and she was adopted in July and found a new friend, Lumina. Her human decided to move home to Florida so Lumina and Lilith came to the shelter in May 2021. Lumina crossed the Rainbow Bridge in 2022 so Lilith is alone again.

A special thanks to Noah's Pet Cemetery & Crematory for sponsoring our page.

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In October, we had the incredible opportunity to collaborate with the **Bissell Pet Foundation** in hosting a free spay and neuter event. What makes this story truly remarkable is that we were given only seven days notice to prepare for this significant event.

THE RESULT? AN ASTOUNDING 241 FREE STERILIZATION SURGERIES WERE PERFORMED IN SIX DAYS, OFFERING HOPE TO 241 FAMILIES AND THEIR BELOVED PETS.

This achievement was made possible through countless hours, a substantial financial investment, and unwavering staff and volunteer commitment. Now, we turn to you, our community, for support. The demand for affordable veterinary services is substantial, as evidenced by this event's full booking within just two hours of opening. We want to continue providing these vital events and services in the future, and this is where your help is essential. Your donations can empower us to host more of these life-saving events, along with continuing to provide low-cost and free services, vaccinations, and preventative care for those in need.

WE INVITE YOU TO BE A PART OF THIS JOURNEY WITH US, TO MAINTAIN THE CARE, COMPASSION, AND HOPE WE BRING TO THE PETS AND PET OWNERS IN OUR COMMUNITY. YOUR CONTRIBUTION, HAS THE POWER TO TRANSFORM LIVES,--ONE PET AT A TIME!



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Furry Philosophy



By Jodi Jarvis -Therrian CPDT-KA CTDI
Certified Pet First-Aid & CPR Instructor
AKC CGC Evaluator

It is more important to know what sort of person has a disease than to know what sort of disease a person has.

This is a quote from Hippocrates, the father of medicine, 2,500 years ago. I believe this Hippocrates quote applies to our pet's health and behavior as well.

I have said it before; the animals in my life are my best teachers. Olaf, my dog who I am fortunate enough to reside with now, has taught me about diversity and understanding that many modalities in life can get us to our destination.

In past articles, I wrote about my dog Olaf, who had heartworm when I rescued him. I promised I would report back to you, my readers, the outcome. He FINALLY tested NEGATIVE! Happy dance!!!!

My philosophy has always been 100% organic and natural. Olaf having this disease taught me to keep an open mind and forced me to look at many options before I made my final decision. Thanks to Dr. Swift, Rita Hogan, herbalist, and Toyna Christiansen from Must Love Dogs, I felt I was able to make the right decisions for Olaf. He was given herbs, and also had to take the antibiotic Doxycycline and Advantage Multi, heartworm spot on drops. He was given many supplements and foods to support his body. I would have never come to that combination on my own. They helped educate me to make decisions and know that the fast kill, which can be so hard on a dog's body, was not for us. Making lemonade from lemons, Olaf has given me the gift of knowledge to share with others struggling with the same decisions.

As a dog trainer, I love dog activities and I want my dog to love everything! I believe Olaf also reminds me that every dog has his strengths and weaknesses. Olaf is talented at tricks, his "Can Can" is flawless and can make you smile. He is great at scent work, but not all kinds of hides (hidden scents), so we do what sniffies make his tail wag and not worry about the others. He shines brightly at rally and we almost dance through the rings because we are having so much fun. Olaf has taught me that not every dog is great at holding items in his mouth like my last sweet dog Odin J. Olaf has such a soft touch, that he doesn't want anything to do with holding items tight in his mouth. This has nothing to do with him being "stubborn" as many people would label that as such. I believe it is just not natural to his breed and it makes him uncomfortable. I still play games

to entice him to do it occasionally, but I don't tell him he is bad for not doing it. Instead, I remember to celebrate his strengths and build on them, continuing to do things that bring joy to our hearts together and keep his tail wagging.

I believe that we become so set in our ways that sometimes we have to remind ourselves to keep an open mind. Olaf, without a word, led me to look outside the box and try different behaviors and different ideas that I normally would not have. His individual body and his individual personality allowed me to realize that he has many messages to bring to me in his amazing gift of life.



He makes my heart shine brighter and makes every part of my life better. We have to remember to celebrate our pet's individuality and awesomeness. Remember that old saying by John Wooden, *Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.*

Let's be our dog's advocate, keeping an open mind when it comes to their health and training. Don't

just believe one opinion, take your INDIVIDUAL dog into consideration, do your homework and then the right answer and people to help you will come into your life. I am always happy to advise, please reach out for help. I am so grateful for all my furry friends in my life and the lessons they have taught me. It is my goal in life to help others find the right answers too. As always, keep training fun!

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Rescue Tidbits



Bellwether Harbor: At Bellwether Harbor, we pride ourselves on being a haven for animals with special needs. Our shelter goes beyond the ordinary, welcoming furry friends with unique health requirements,

such as cats relying on prescription diets. As the cost of pet food continues to escalate, our budget faces challenges in providing optimal care. You can make a lasting impact by supporting us with a monetary donation. Help us ensure these special companions receive the nutrition they deserve. Visit bellwetherharbor.org and click the donate button to contribute to their well-being. Your generosity transforms lives, one paw at a time.

Scarlett's Cat Sanctuary & Furry Friends Pet Recovery: Embark on a whimsical journey with Theodore



and Alvin, the dynamic duo of fluffiness! These charming kittens from Scarlett's Cat Sanctuary aim to steal hearts and find their "forever" home together. Join us in preventing the cat overpopulation crisis

through spaying, neutering, and supporting TNVR projects. At Scarlett's, we craft purrsonalities and advocate for adorable bundles of joy! Help create purr-fect tales of companionship. To support our mission, donate via Venmo: ****@ScarlettsCatSanctuary**** or PayPal: ****scarlettscatsanctuary@gmail.com****. Your generosity fuels our crucial work!

West Michigan Ferret Connection: The West Michigan Ferret Connection does not believe ferrets (or any other animal) should be Christmas presents; therefore, adoptions have been suspended until after January 8, 2024. If anyone is interested in supporting the WMFC this holiday season, please visit The Ferret Giving Tree 2023 on the Internet. We have 20 ferrets who need Santas on Trees 6 & 7. www.ferretgivingtree.com (See page 7)

Pet Tales: Hazel is a 2-year-old grey and white female. She was rescued from a life outdoors where she'd apparently



been shot in the leg. Hazel is so happy to be inside! She loves attention and all pets even belly rubs. Hazel loves to be near her people. She either leans on you or keeps a paw on you. She is such a happy and friendly girl.

Hazel is a quiet kitty, until you get her purring. She's pretty mellow but will get the zoomies with her favorite toys. She especially likes a good catnip session. 616-446-1591 pettalesrescueboard@gmail.com — pettalesrescue.com

Bunnies-R-Us Rescue: Hop on over to Bunnies-R-Us Rescue to Adopt. We have so many different kinds of breeds, ages to adopt from. Some of the bunnies we have are re-homers but 90% are rescues. These bunnies deserve a better life. We offer information packets to each adopter and starter food, hay and litter. We also have donations of used items you can purchase to help put money towards other bunnies that need help. Visit our website and look around. We have so much to offer. (see page 12) www.bunniesrusrabbitry.com

CSNIP: For over 20 years, CSNIP has provided spay and neuter services at a price families could afford. Now, families can bring their cats and dogs to CSNIP for additional services including annual exams & vaccines, dental cleanings/extractions, and other surgery and treatments. In 2023, CSNIP has served over 20,000 pets with these expanded services. As a nonprofit, the support of our community allows us to offer additional financial assistance to those who extra help. To learn more about how you can support our mission or schedule an appointment, please visit our website at CSNIP.org.



Fig and Friends Pet Rescue:

Make the season extra magical by having festive holiday fun with Fig and Friends! Come get your furry family members photo with Santa Paws. Saturday, Dec.9 from Noon – 3 p.m. at the Pet Supplies Plus in the Woodpointe shopping center (2500 East Beltline Ave) Saturday, Dec.16 from 10 a.m. – 2

p.m. at Your Pets Naturally (6439 28th St SE, GR 49546). We ask for a donation of at least \$10 per photo. Check our website or Facebook page for more information and additional dates. www.facebook.com/figandfriends or www.figandfriendspetrescue.org

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Pleasant Hearts Pet Food Pantry is 100% volunteer run and donation based. We have seen an increase in need from our community but a drop in donations. This is not unique to us, it's the reality in all of animal welfare currently. With our mission to keep pets in their homes with their families and out of shelters, we will continue to work tirelessly to keep our shelves full. We could not do that without our awesome team of volunteers & our amazing community - CAN YOU HELP? We are in need of dedicated volunteers and donations of in-kind items and monetary donations. Visit our website to find more information: www.pleasantheartspetfoodpantry.org.

Community Cat Crew is a 501c3 Non-Profit Cat Rescue dedicated to TNVR (Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return). CCC focuses on taking in vulnerable cats and kittens to get them adoption ready, while educating the community on the importance of vaccinating and sterilizing.



We are renovating our adoption center and it is almost complete! We will be located at 3901 Chicago Drive Grandville Suite 107! Eventually we will house some of our amazing adults and some of our juveniles at the center.

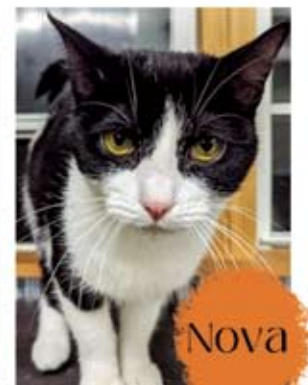
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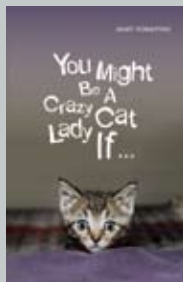
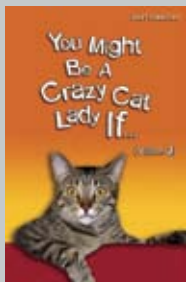


Grum

GIVING TUESDAY
November 28th

Are you participating on Giving Tuesday?

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You Might be a Crazy Cat Lady If ... (vol. 1 & 2) are collections of humorous, heartwarming short stories with photographs.

In *Cat Women of West Michigan, the Secret World of Cat Rescue*, you'll meet women who start rescues, trap-neuter-return feral cats, foster homeless cats, socialize wild kittens, bottle-feed orphans, transport cats for spay/neuter surgeries, fund-raise and so much more. You'll learn the stories behind rescues such as Heaven Can Wait, Faithful to Felines, Carol's Ferals, Focus on Ferals, Crash's Landing, and several others.

Available at amazon.com, some local stores and at www.janetvormittag.com or by mail:

Mail your order and a check made out to Janet Vormittag to: Cats and Dogs Magazine, P.O. Box 996, Jenison, MI 49429 \$13 per book, plus postage (\$3.50 for the first book and \$1 for each additional book).

Bunnies-R-Us Rescue is a non-profit organization in Wyoming, Michigan. We have been rescuing rabbits for about two years. This year alone we have had more than 100 bunnies brought to us from the streets. What people don't realize is when you throw a domestic bunny out in the wild; they can't survive like a wild bunny. Wild bunnies are not in the same category as a domestic. They need different foods to survive. They can't even breed with each other, nor can a domestic bunny defend itself. When someone throws a domestic bunny out into the wild, they can get hurt or even die.

Below is Jasper who was found wandering the streets with another domestic bunny, Jasmine. It took two weeks for a lady to finally catch them. Jasmine was not hurt but did have fleas. Jasper was hurt badly. He was either bitten by an animal or he was stabbed with a stick. The wound was badly infected. Jasper had to have surgery and thank goodness this boy is a fighter and made it through surgery and is thriving.

Jasper is not the first injured bunny we've taken in. Bunnies-R-Us pays for the expenses to try to save these bunnies that people no longer want. Please call us and we will do everything in our power to help so a bunny doesn't end up on the streets.

We are desperately looking for people to help donate to the fund **Rescue Bunny Emergency Fund**. This way when a bunny is left of the streets and comes in hurt we have the funds to get them the care that is needed. Without the help of donations that flooded in for Jasper we would not have been able to help him and he would have died.

If you have it in your heart please help us out by donating to the rescue bunny emergency funds at www.bunniesrusrabbitry.com



Jasper an hour after surgery.



Jasper two weeks after surgery.



Harley



Jasmine



Jasper's first night after surgery.

Hop on over to Bunnies-R-Us Rescue to Adopt. We have so many different kinds of breeds, ages to choose from. Some of the bunnies we have are re-homers but 90% are rescues. These bunnies deserve a better life. We offer information packets to each adopter and starter food, hay and litter. We also have donations of used items you can purchase to help put money towards other bunnies who need your help. Visit our website and look around.

We have so much to offer.

www.bunniesrusrabbitry.com

This page is sponsored in the memory of Dick and Penny Mercer.



Dick and Penny Mercer were lifelong animal welfare advocates. Dick was a founding member of CSNIP, which strives to prevent pet overpopulation and improve the quality of life for dogs, cats, and their caregivers with accessible, high-quality, reduced-cost veterinary care.

Both Dick and Penny spent many volunteer hours working with animals in need. It was their wish to keep their legacy alive by supporting animals, long after they were gone.

Empowering Communities: The Vital Role of Return to Field (RTF) in Animal Sheltering

Submitted by Harbor Humane Society

A compassionate and transformative strategy for managing community cat populations, RTF not only safeguards these free-roaming felines but also fosters a harmonious coexistence between humans and their feline neighbors. Harbor Humane Society kicked off our RTF programs a few years ago, and offers assistance with logistics and spay/neuter services.

What is RTF?

Return to Field (RTF) is a strategy in animal shelters that involves returning healthy feral or free-roaming cats to their original location after spaying or neutering. This humane approach aims to control the cat population while allowing them to live in their familiar environment. RTF recognizes these cats are often better suited to outdoor living and can contribute to natural pest control. The program promotes the well-being of both the cats and the community.

How does RTF help my community?

By spaying or neutering feral and community cats and returning them to their original location, RTF prevents the continuous breeding cycle, reducing the overall cat population over time. This helps control the number of feral cats, even minimizing potential nuisances such as noise and territorial behavior. Additionally, since these cats are often effective at controlling rodent populations, the community benefits from a natural and environmentally friendly form of pest control.

What is ear-tipping?

One key aspect of RTF involves identifying ear-tipped cats in the community. An ear-tip is a small, straight-line cut made on the tip of a cat's ear while under anesthesia during spaying or neutering. This universally recognized mark serves as a visual identifier that a cat has been part of RTF (or TNR) program. When you spot an ear-tipped cat, you're witnessing a success story – a cat that has been sterilized, vaccinated, and returned to its community to live out its life without contributing to further overpopulation! It also means that the cat has been responsibly managed and



An ear-tipped community cat.

should not be brought to the shelter as a stray. Bringing in an ear-tipped cat causes unnecessary stress for that cat, as well as strain on shelter resources that could be better directed toward cats already waiting to be adopted into home or genuinely in need.

So, what should you do if you encounter an ear-tipped cat? Refrain from bringing it to the shelter unless there is an obvious sign of illness or injury. Instead, support local RTF/TNR initiatives, and help spread awareness about responsible community cat management!

So many communities across the United States have seen success with programs like these. Return to Field isn't just a pragmatic approach to population control; it's a compassionate strategy that respects the humane care of our felines and empowers neighborhoods to proactively address feline overpopulation. By embracing RTF and understanding the significance of ear-tipping, we can create a brighter future for both our feline friends and the communities they call home!

Please reach out to Harbor Humane Society for more information on RTF or the many programs to support our pets and people.

*www.harborhumane.org
616-399-2119.*



This page is sponsored by Hands 4 Paws in memory of Michelle Elliott, a long-time supporter of Harbor Humane Society.

Michelle Elliott was a generous soul with a wry sense of humor and a desire to share her creative talents with others. Besides teaching knitting machine classes, she supported many charities. From knitted cat toys for animal rescues to wool caps for soldiers in Afghanistan, she was always busy helping others. She never sought praise or recognition but gave willingly with a loving heart. The members of Hands 4 Paws will miss her greatly.

Reuben's Room Cat Rescue

A 501(c)(3) non-profit, all volunteer, no kill cat rescue.

www.reubensroom.org

catrescuereubensroom@gmail.com

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We have cats of all ages – youngsters, teens, and seniors – they are all great!



Smokey - 13 yr. old
front declawed male



Squirt



Stumpy

12 yr. old bonded brothers



Diesel-6 yr. old
front declawed



Molly-11 yr old
female



Gizmo – 7 yr. old female



Ucey (female)
12 yr. old



Little Bit
16 yr. old girl



Sheba – 7 yr. old female



Mila - 8 yr. old female

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Flo – 3 yr. old female



Zack - 4 yr. old male



Jinx & Emmy – 6 yr. old bonded



Cato – 10 yr. old male

Our Readers Write

I called him Max

By Bill Bultema

All I was looking for was a couple of fish for my aquarium. When I got to the end of the aisle where the fish tanks were, something caught my eye. To my left in a crate, was the most beautiful pair of blue eyes staring at me. It was a male Chocolate Point Siamese. He said hi, and I said hi back. After we chatted for a bit, I went home with my fish...and thought about that kitty all night. The next day I went back, paid the \$20 adoption fee and took him home. He didn't have a name so I named him Maxwell. Called him Max for short. That was spring 1981. Little did I know then that this was the beginning of a 42 year journey.

About a year after I adopted Max, I had found a Siamese Seal Point female who I fell for. She came with a name and I thought Tabu was an interesting name, so she kept it. Fast forward to January 1997. Max was acting kind of funny so I took him to the vet. We were given the bad news that Max, at 17 years old, was suffering from liver failure. We had to put him down. Not two weeks later Tabu was acting funny. Kidney failure. We lost her at 15 years old. We didn't even think about getting another cat until nine months later when our vet called and told us he had a 5-year-old Siamese Silver Point. The owner was moving and couldn't take her along and wanted the cat put down. With nothing wrong with her, the vet called us and asked us to give her a try. If it didn't work out, we could bring her back. That's when Katie moved in.

A few years later my girlfriend, who would soon be my wife, decided Katie needed a companion. We found a gray and white domestic short hair who we liked and wanted to meet. She was in this tiny startup shelter that had been open only about two weeks on the west side of Grand Rapids. We instantly fell in love with Maude and took her home a couple of days later. This was also the start of our association with Crash's Landing.

Then it started to snowball.

Next came Thor and all of his health problems. Then came Chuck. Then Thomas. Ethan, Skeet, Marshall, who was deaf, my buddy Oberon, the twins Oreo and Cookie. At one point we were at nine indoor and one outdoor cat! I finally said stop, no more. Yeah right! They are like potato chips, you can't have just one.

In late 2013 my wife, Christina, was given the news that she had a disease for which there was no cure and that she probably had no more than five years left. Yet, she still managed to talk me into one more adoption.

In 2016, a Russian Blue was found stray by a friend of Christina's. That was when Archer came to live with us.



Bill and Tucker

Christina passed away on January 16, 2019 and left me with six cats to care for. Starting in early 2020, I lost three of them in rapid succession to old age including my buddy Oberon. I was devastated when he left. A fourth one, T'Pol, went to live with my new lady-friend.

Now I'm left with just two. In July of 2021 I decided I wanted another white cat as I missed Oberon. After an online search, the closest one I could find was in a shelter in Hillsdale, Michigan. I made the 265-mile-round trip on a Sunday morning and ended up coming home with Tucker. A one-year-old, white domestic short hair. My final adoption...

There is so much more that I would like to tell here, but it is not possible. I think I have done a good job over the years and I sincerely hope I have, but I still feel like I could do more.

However, Tucker is the last one. Because with my final adoption came the realization that he could possibly live longer than me and I don't like the thought of that. There has been a lot of joy and laughter over the years but every loss makes a hole in my heart that nothing can fill.

To all my fur-babies who are gone, I am happy and comforted knowing that mom is there to take good care of you.

Maxwell, Tabu, Katie, Maude, Thor, Chuck, Thomas, Ethan, Bill, Onyx, Marshall, Skeet, Oberon, Oreo, T'Pol, and Tolstoy, I miss you all so very much.

Cookie, Archer, Tucker and I will enjoy our final years together until that time when we can all be together again.

And to think this all started 42 years ago because of a pair of stunning blue eyes.

Holiday Gifts That Give Back

By Lydia O'Neil

It's the time of year to spread some good cheer and what better way to do it than to get into the spirit of the season with gifts that give back. Here is a select group of made in Michigan products for pet parents that help our furry friends.

Snuffles by Jen & Friends



Dogs not only need physical exercise but mental stimulation as well. These handcrafted snufflemats are the perfect puzzle for sniffing and de-stressing your pup, especially over the winter when getting to play outside isn't an option.

COST: These adorable snufflemats come in a variety of colors and sizes and range in cost from \$18 to \$45.

GIVES BACK: 100% of the purchase price will

be donated to The Kent County Animal Shelter

PURCHASE AT: Vintage+More, 3101 Broadmoor Ave SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49512

LINK: <https://www.facebook.com/VintagePlusMore/>

Pups Barkery Dog Treats



These limited-edition holiday dog treats are made with sweet potato, cranberry and lots and lots of love. Your dogs will enjoy these delicious homemade treats and you'll feel good knowing that they are free of chemicals, preservatives, sugar or salt.

COST: \$8 per bag, or a single treat is \$1 each.

GIVES BACK: 100% of the profits will go to The Bissell Pet Foundation to

help end dog homelessness.

PURCHASE: Pick some up today at The Holland Farmers Market on Saturdays from 9-1 until December 16th. Or customers can also order through their Facebook and Instagram accounts, by email or by phone.

LINK: <https://www.facebook.com/pupsbarkery>

Photo with Santa at The Pack Indoor Dog Park



Capture the holidays with a Santa selfie! Bring your furbaby and get a high-quality photo with Santa and a beautiful backdrop! Once dogs arrive, they will be put on a waitlist and texted when it's their turn. Aside from indoor and outdoor play areas for dogs, The Pack also features a restaurant and bar so there are plenty of things to do for humans

as well. Please know that all dogs must provide proof of vaccinations (Bordetella, distemper and rabies) and must have a membership if they are staying afterwards to play. **WHEN:** SATURDAY, December 15th from 10-1pm. Photos are first come, first serve.

COST: \$10 per photo.

GIVES BACK: 100% of the profits will go to The Pleasant Hearts Pet Pantry which donates free food to animals in need.

LINK: For more information call 616-734-3254 or email: contact@thepackdogpark.com. The Pack is located at: 5205 W River Drive, NE, Comstock Park, MI, 49321

Wait! Is There a Walrus in Our Bed? by Lydia O'Neil



This delightful children's book about two naughty dogs that won't go to bed is told in hilarious rhymes and premium color illustrations and is perfect for young readers, two and up.

COST: \$11.99 paperback and \$9.98 for the kindle version

GIVES BACK: 100% of the profits go to Michigan rescue groups MPEP Outreach that helps chained up dogs

and Bark Nation that works with Animal Control to end dog fighting.

PURCHASE: Amazon link: <https://a.co/d/293c4Z4>

Caring for Feral Cats

By Janet Vormittag

Jean Briggs can't remember exactly when she started helping the cats in her Kentwood neighborhood, but she knows why.

When Jean was 8 years old the family cat, Boots, had three babies. When the kittens were old enough to be on their own Jean's mother told her to get rid of them. Jean felt she had no choice but to do what her mother instructed. The young girl cried as she put the kittens in the basket on her bicycle and dropped them off blocks from home.

"That stayed with me all my life. It was traumatic. It hurt me to do it," Jean recalled. When she got older Jean promised herself she would never abandon another cat.

Jean guessed it was close to 12 years ago when she first noticed stray cats in the woods across the street from the apartment complex where she lived. She constructed makeshift shelters from cardboard boxes for the homeless kitties and started feeding them.

"They're a colony—a family. They struggle. They can't make it on their own," she said. She suspects a lot of them died before she stepped in to help.

One day someone noticed what she was doing and offered to help. The woman was a volunteer from Carol's Ferals, a group that advocated for outside cats.

The entire colony was live-trapped. Kittens were socialized and placed for adoption. Ten older cats were returned to the property after they were spayed/neutered. The cardboard shelters were replaced with sturdy insulated structures and filled with straw. A sign was put up to inform people a colony of cats lived in the woods and that they were being cared for, it included a reminder that it was illegal to abandon animals. "It's abuse to drop off domestic animals in the woods," Jean said.

Jean faithfully feeds the cats twice a day. She also supplies fresh water. The cats come out to greet her when they see her coming.

The cats enrich Jean's life. She knows each one's personality and talks to them. She added animals are smart and people could learn from them if they took the time to notice.

"Just because they have four legs doesn't mean they don't have a brain," she said.

A few years ago, Jean, who had lived in her apartment for 25 years, was surprised when she was threatened with eviction for taking care of the cats. She contacted an investigative reporter at WZZM 13 and shared the intimidating letter sent to her from the manager of the apartment complex. The story made the nightly news.

"Don't push me into a corner. I'll come out fighting," Jean said. "I'm not a nice little cat lady. I stand up for them."

The land where the cats lived was owned by the City of Grand Rapids and city officials were aware of what Jean



Jean Briggs caring for the colony of feral cats near her Kentwood home.

was doing. The manager couldn't stop Jean or evict her for being a caretaker to homeless cats.

Jean added her neighbors don't complain about the cats and one neighbor has even befriended the colony and brings them treats.

When Jean learned about another colony of about a dozen cats on the other side of her apartment complex she started feeding them too. She also arranged to have them trapped and neutered/spayed. Recently the vacant land where the second colony of cats lived was sold and Jean was told the cats needed to be removed. Carol's Ferals was no longer in business, but another group, Feral Cat Solutions, helped Jean trap the cats and found them new homes. She's sad about the situation. She had been caring for the colony for seven years—the cats trusted her and she felt like their mother.

"It's a big adjustment. I lost my family and they lost me," Jean said.

But when considering the big picture, Jean thinks moving the cats to new homes might be in her best interest. At 87 years old, Jean is starting to feel her age and wonders how much longer she'll be able to care for her furry friends.

Jean believes God and St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals, had a hand in the situation. The removal of the cats made her life easier but it wasn't a happy time.

Only three cats remain at the original location—the rest have died, but their memories live on with Jean. She has paintings of two of them hanging on a wall in her living room; Missey who lived to be 12 and Sammy who was 17 when he passed.

Maureen Herendeen, founder and director of Feral Cat Solutions, admires Jean for her commitment to abandon animals. "She is truly an advocate for the voiceless."

Maureen is impressed Jean goes out seven days a week to care for the cats, no matter the weather. "We've never encountered a caregiver her age that has been protecting and caring for colony cats for so many years."

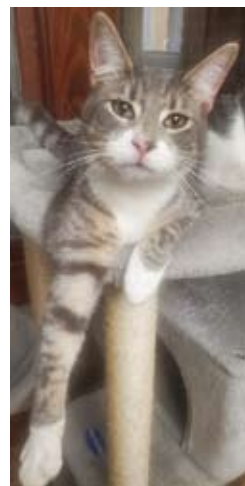


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 Pet Tales Rescue



Pet Tales is a non-profit rescue organization serving the greater West Michigan area. We place dogs and cats in loving, responsible, committed permanent homes following a comprehensive adoption process which includes taking considerable care in finding good matches and educating prospective adopters about the responsibilities and costs of bringing a dog/cat into their homes and lives.

boys have tested positive for FeLV but most cats will never see any adverse affects from this. Please reach out to discuss exactly that that may mean but don't discount them just because of it.



Meet **Blizzard** (or Blizzy, as he's called). He is a beautiful gray and white striped tabby with very soft fur. His estimated birthdate is 4.12.23. He was rescued as a small kitten at a NE Grand Rapids apartment complex in June with his sister. Since then, his sister has found her forever home and now it's Blizzy's turn! He is very sweet and gentle, the minute you start petting him, he begins to purr. He is not going to be a lap cat, but he doesn't hide and is not scared. Blizzy does enjoy attention. He is a very chill cat and just moseys around the house doing



Sushi is a 2-year-old black and white American Bulldog/Pitt mix. She is 60 pounds of absolute sweetness! She came to her foster home along with her seven puppies. She is an amazing Mama who has finished raising her babies and is now ready to find her

forever home. Sushi is an energetic, happy girl, who would love a secure yard to run and play in. She is also content to lie in front of the TV with you at the end of the day. She gets along great with other dogs, and would do well with another dog in the home for company. She is also a goofy bundle of enthusiasm with a strong waggy tail, so she would not be suitable for small children. She loves cuddles and car rides, considers herself a lap dog, gives plenty of kisses, and can always be found carrying a toy around. She is spayed, microchipped and up to date on vaccines

his own thing. He adores the older cat in his foster home, you will often find them lounging together on the cat tree. You'll also find him goofing around with the other kittens. He is great around kids but has not been tested with dogs. With proper introduction, he should be fine.

Blizzy has tested positive for FIV which was transmitted from his mother at birth. He has been retested at 6 months of age and it is again positive. Please don't let this diagnosis scare you from scooping this guy up! He can lead a normal life and can also live with other cats that don't carry the virus. I hope you'll consider giving this extremely handsome guy a wonderful normal life, he is so deserving!

Some facts about FIV: Cats with FIV can share food bowls, litter boxes and toys without transmitting the virus to other cats in the household; they can also sleep and play together. FIV cannot be transmitted to humans. FIV is shed through a cat's saliva and the most common way is through deep bite wounds that occur during catfights. It is rarely spread by casual day-to-day contact between cats in households with stable social structures. We'd be happy to provide further information about FIV upon request.



Meet **Phineas and Ferb!** A dynamic duo of short hair orange and white brothers. These boys are bonded so we want to see them get adopted together. They are the perfect balance of playful and cuddly, when one is off being crazy the other comes in for a snuggle. They've got the silkiest fur and are just a delight to have. These

www.pettalesrescue.com
www.facebook.com/pettalesrescue

This page is sponsored in the memory of Dick and Penny Mercer.



Dick and Penny Mercer were lifelong animal welfare advocates. Dick was a founding member of CSNIP, which strives to prevent pet overpopulation and improve the quality of life for dogs, cats, and their caregivers with accessible, high-quality, reduced-cost veterinary care.

Both Dick and Penny spent many volunteer hours working with animals in need. It was their wish to keep their legacy alive by supporting animals, long after they were gone.

The importance of food choices in pets

By Amy Pietras, DVM

The right nutrition for your pet will help them live longer and delay/prevent deadly illnesses.

I understand the struggle between wanting to feed your pets high quality food vs. cost as well as the desire for “clean food”, such as homemade or raw pet food diets—once upon a time I made and fed raw food to my own pets.

Veterinary school taught me the dangers of feeding animals a homemade diet.

The key points of animal nutrition are:

1. AAFCO certified. This label on your pet food means it is appropriately balanced with the protein, vitamins, minerals, etc. your pet needs.

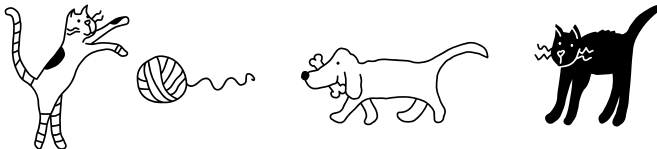
2. Wet food.

3. Water.

I have seen people kill their pets with homemade diets. Diets that are a mix of sardines, liver, baby food. Diets high on meat. None of those have the amount of calcium an animal needs to keep their bones healthy and their heart pumping. Too little calcium in the diet leads to the body stealing calcium from the bones, severely weakening them. Too much calcium leads to the formation of stones in organs, which cause organ damage and/or death. Animals also need a specific calcium to phosphorous ratio. These are just a few of the reasons why the majority of your pets' food should be labeled with the AAFCO seal of approval.

Studies show feeding cats wet food can delay the onset and/or progression of kidney failure. Wet food is more work and more costly than dry food, but with little effort you can soak your pet's dry food in water and make a wet-food mash out of it.

Water, water, water. Cats' tongues are not meant for drinking, cats are meant to get their water requirements from their food source. Adding water to dry food, and even mixing extra water in with wet food, is an easy way to achieve that. Encouraging water intake is also a way to minimize the chance of your pet developing crystals/stones in their bladder, or fatal urinary blockages. The more often your animal urinates the less likely the bladder is to accumulate harmful bacteria or particles.



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Training Tips

Dogs and winter weather

By Robert Crough

The winter months are fast approaching. It's always good to understand what type of coat our dogs have and what our dogs' limitations maybe in the cold weather.

With a couple exceptions, almost every breed of dog fits into one of five common dog coat styles. Smooth, double coat, silky, woolly, and wire coat.

In the cold winter months, the double coated dogs (Huskies, Newfys, Chows, etc.) tend to like to lay outside in the soft snow while their short haired counterparts (Chihuahuas, Labs, Beagles etc.) like to be inside on a nice warm bed.

Though there are exceptions, as a general rule it is best to refrain from shaving a dog due to concerns over temperature. A good grooming and brush out should be all the dog needs. You shouldn't shave a dog in the summer or winter just like you wouldn't remove the insulation from the walls of your home. This is why dogs like Newfys and Huskies can lay outside in a snowstorm with three inches

of snow piling on them and the snow doesn't melt.

If you are worried about the winter months and how long a dog should be outside, you could look at the FAA regulations on shelter from extreme temperatures during transport. There were multiple studies done to establish the guidelines.

These rules are as follows; "Dogs must not be exposed to air temperatures above 85°F (29.5°C) or below 45°F (7.2°C) for a period of more than four hours."

When temperature go below freezing, or above 85 degrees a dog's feet are the first concern. In the summer, the pavement gets very hot and in the winter the entire ground can freeze solid. I always give my dogs short five to ten minute breaks in the below freezing temperatures with constant supervision. If the dog is experiencing temperatures too cold or too hot, the dog will lift feet up one at a time, or lay down with the feet off the ground. If you see you dog doing this, bring them in immediately.

With a diligent eye on our pets, being aware of the type of coat our particular dogs have, and limiting the time they spend exposed to extreme weather, we can keep our dogs safe and happy through the cold snowy months.

*Robert Crough, Owner of Paradigm Dog School,
(616) 796 2275, Paradigmds@gmail.com.*

Community Resource Guide

Cemeteries

Clock Timeless Pets

1469 Peck St., Muskegon, MI 49441
231-722-3721 - www.clocktimelesspets.com

Noah's Pet Cemetery & Crematory

2727 Orange Ave. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546
616-949-1390 – noahspc@comcast.net
www.noahspetcemetery.com

Trusted Journey Pet Memorial

2755 64th St. SW, Byron Center, MI 49315
616-538-6050 – www.trustedjourney.com

Feral Cat Support Services

A Feral Haven

Supporting feral/community cats in Ottawa and Allegan Counties by loaning live traps, and providing spay/neuter vouchers and food.

<http://www.aferalhavenmi.org> – 616-377-4783
a.feral.haven.mi@gmail.com

Humane Societies/Shelters

Allegan County Animal Shelter

2293 33rd Street, Allegan, MI 49010
269-686-5112 - www.petfinder.com/shelters/MI299.html

Harbor Humane Society

14345 Bagley Street (at US 31), West Olive, MI 49460
616-399-2119 - www.harborhumane.org

Humane Society of West Michigan

3077 Wilson Drive NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49534
616-453-8900 - www.hswestmi.org

Ionia County Animal Shelter

3853 Sparrow Drive, Ionia, MI 48846
616-527-9040 - www.petfinder.com/shelters/MI342.html

Kent County Animal Shelter

740 Fuller Ave. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503
616-632-7300 - www.accesskent.com/kcas

Pound Buddies Animal Shelter & Adoption Center

3279 E Laketon Ave., Muskegon, MI 49442
231-724-6500 - www.poundbuddies.org

Pet In-Home Hospice

Heaven at Home Pet Hospice — In-home pet hospice, palliative pet care and euthanasia for companion animals

616-498-1316 – doc@pethospicevet.com
www.pethospicevet.com

Pet Services

Pleasant Hearts Pet Food Pantry

705 11th St NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504
info@pleasanthearspetfoodpantry.org
www.pleasanthearspetfoodpantry.org
Distribution is every other Saturday, email with any questions

Pet Training

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616-796-2275 – paradigmds@gmail.com
www.paradigmdogschool.com

Rescue Groups

Bellwether Harbor Animal Shelter and Training Center

PO Box 475 - 7645 W. 48th St. Fremont MI, 49412
Call for an appointment 231-924-9230
www.bellwetherharbor.org

BestPals Animal Rescue Center

13888 Blair St., Holland, MI 49424
Call for appointment, 616-212-3368
www.bestpalsarc.wix.com – bestpalsarc@gmail.com

Big Lake Humane Society - a no kill, non-profit shelter

Formerly Muskegon Humane Society
2640 Marquette Ave., Muskegon, MI 49442
231-773-8689 - www.muskegonhumanesociety.org

Bunny Adoption & Rescue Services

www.bunniesrusrabbitry.com
Bunniesrusrabbitry@hotmail.com
Owner/Founder Diane Dykema

Cannonsville Critters

Michelle Hocking — Helping cats in Montcalm County
989-287-2553 – www.cannonsvillecritters.org

Faithful to Felines

Adult Cat Companionship
www.faithful2felines.com
Info@faithful2felines.com
231-773-3030

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616-320-2400 — figandfriendspetrescue@gmail.com
www.figandfriendspetrescue.org

Pet Tales Rescue

A non-profit, volunteer, foster-based, all-breed dog/cat rescue.
Kathy Brown, P.O. Box 88084, Kentwood, MI 49518
616-446-1591 – pettalesrescueboard@gmail.com
www.pettalesrescue.com – www.facebook.com/pettalesrescue

Reuben's Room Cat Rescue

Jeanine Buckner
A no-kill, non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization
www.reubensroom.org
catrescuereubensroom@gmail.com

Community Resource Guide

Scarlett's Cat Sanctuary & Furry Friends Pet Recovery

A non-profit 501c3 in-home based cat and kitten rescue
Recovering lost pets & finding homes for the homeless
<https://www.facebook.com/furryfriendspetrecovery>
scarlettscatsanctuary@gmail.com

West Michigan Ferret Connection

Rescue - Adoption - Boarding - Education
Dee Gage, 616-447-2978 - wmfc2001@att.net
www.westmichiganferretconnection.com
LIKE West Michigan Ferret Connection on Facebook

Wishbone Pet Rescue Alliance

Managing the Allegan County Animal Shelter
P.O. Box 124, Douglas, MI 49406
269-455-5247 - www.wishbonepetrescue.org

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www.1stmicrogreenery.com

Wishbone House Thrift Store and Cat Adoption Center

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165 Blue Star Hwy, Douglas, MI 49406
269-455-5247

Veterinarians

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3604 64th Street, Saugatuck, MI 49453
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www.laketowncathospital.com

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Wildlife

West Michigan Wildlife Center

Call 616-361-6109 or text 616-606-5805
www.westmichiganwildlife.org
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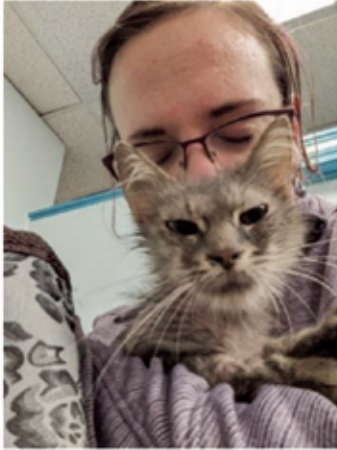
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616-777-0645

Emerald's Second Chance



On a cold day in October, six cats were found abandoned and in rough condition on a trail at a mobile home park. Their rescuer took in five of the six to care for, but the sixth seemed unlikely to survive. SCCWM was contacted, and immediately took her in and named her Emerald. When she arrived, her entire body was cold, she was limp, and it was hard to tell if she was breathing. It took about an hour or more of swaddling in blankets with a heating pad, and lots of snuggles with our director, Laura Moody, before she started responding and feeling warm to the touch. When she was awake and warm, she was offered some baby food, and instantly perked up. She was alive, she was safe and warm, and she had a full belly. She was a fighter and not ready to go!

Emerald has a long road to recovery, but cats like her are why we do the work that we do at SCCWM. Many shelters are full and not able to accept many more cats, and as winter approaches, we will continue to see more and more heartbreaking situations like Emerald's. Even though we and other shelters are already spread thin, we do our best to help cats in need and to educate the public on the importance of spaying and neutering pets.

Through the help of your donations, we are able to continue providing care for so many cats. Every little bit helps, whether it's food, supplies, or monetary donations, large or small. Second Chance Cats of West Michigan is committed to helping cats find a second chance at a loving life!



1120 Knapp St. NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503

info@sccatswm.org

www.sccatswm.org

Follow us on social media!



**Visit us soon and meet all
the wonderful cats looking
for their forever homes.**

Open Hours

Friday 11-2

Saturday 11-4

Sunday 11-4



We are a 501c3 certified non-profit with a mission to help cats at *municipal shelters* who are at risk for euthanasia, or cats who have special/medical needs that shelters have a hard time managing. We believe every cat deserves a "second chance" and our volunteers work hard to help these cats find their perfect forever home!



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If your pet has breathing difficulty, trauma, blood loss. etc., or cannot wait at least 24 hours before needing surgery, you should seek treatment at an ER.