

CATS AND DOGS

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO COMPANION ANIMALS



Fetch MI Home — Page 19



Brothers Scooter and Scotch need a home.
Wishbone House Rescue Tidbit
Page 8



Tara Batema and Gillian
Curing FIP — Page 4

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MICHELE'S RESCUE
SCOOTER NEEDS A HOME
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CATS AND DOGS

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Curing FIP

As far back as she can remember, Tara Batema has had a thing for pregnant cats. Maybe it's because when Tara was young, her Mom rescued a cat who later gave birth to four kittens.

At a time when it's common for the pregnancies of cats to be terminated through spay surgery, Tara specializes in fostering pregnant cats. "I love raising kittens from birth to adoption," she said. She realizes there is an overpopulation of cats, but doesn't see abort/spay as the answer, unless it's an early-stage pregnancy.

Tara has Ehlers-Danlos Syndrome (EDS), a rare genetic connective-tissue disorder that causes a shortened life expectancy—her Dad passed from EDS when he was 41. Tara is now 44.

"I was born with it. It's my normal. I've learned my limitations and I find happiness in little things," she said. One of those things is kittens.

One day at her Mom's house in Hamilton, Tara thought she saw a squirrel in the driveway. Her eyes were deceiving her, it wasn't a squirrel, it was a starving, dehydrated gray kitten.

"I couldn't afford to keep it, but I did anyways," she said. She named the kitten Hope and she became the ambassador for Tara's Facebook page, Touch of Cats.

Online, Tara started following Tiny Kittens, The Kitten Lady and Kitten Academy.

I want to do this she remembers thinking.

Tara now fosters for Kittens in the Mittens, a foster-based cat rescue in West Michigan. She names each litter after a letter of the alphabet and chronicles their stories on Touch of Cats.

Tara hit a snag with the G Litter. All four kittens were orange so she named them the Golden Globes and named them after movie stars. One was too small to survive. Two kittens were fine. The fourth kitten, Gillian, was diagnosed with FIP.

Feline infectious peritonitis (FIP) is a viral disease in cats caused by certain strains of a virus called feline



Tara Batema and her foster kitten, Gillian, who was diagnosed with FIP and is undergoing a new treatment for the once fatal disease.

coronavirus. Thanks to Dr. Niels Pedersen and a team of researchers, the discovery of the use of antiviral drug GS-441524 has revolutionized FIP treatment. What was once a fatal disease is now treatable.

The treatment consists of 84 daily injections. Dosage is determined by weight. Gillian weighed a pound when she was diagnosed—her dosage increased as she gained weight. Tara estimated she would need 13 vials of the drug at a cost of \$845.

On Touch of Cats, Tara started a fundraiser to cover the expense of the medication, veterinarian

visits and bloodwork, which has to be done every four weeks.

Tara gave Gillian the injections herself. After the series, there is an 84-day observation period—at this point Gillian is close to half way through observation. If there isn't a relapse during that time, Gillian will be considered cured. Then she will be spayed, vaccinated and available for adoption.

"I hope there's a special somebody out there for her," Tara said, adding she's emotional when she adopts out her kittens. "It's sad, but it's sadder if they die. Their lives are more important than my sadness."

You can follow Tara's foster adventures on her Facebook page, Touch of Cats. To learn more about helping cats diagnosed with FIP, go to www.fipwarriors.com.

Feline Wellness Center

After 25 years of working as an associate veterinarian at Clyde Park Veterinary Clinic, Dr. Jen Gillum opened her own practice, the Feline Wellness Center.

Twenty years ago, Dr. Jen founded Crash's Landing Cat Rescue. Two years later, she founded a second rescue, Big Sid's Sanctuary, which caters to cats who test positive for the FIV or FeLV viruses.

In May 2021, Crash's Landing and Big Sid's moved from their Diamond Avenue location in Grand Rapids to a larger facility in Tallmadge Township, a few miles west of Standale.

With the cats moved out of the old shelter, Dr. Jen wasn't sure what to do with the vacant building. Then she had the idea to transform the building into a wellness center for cats.

"It was an opportunity I couldn't pass up," she said.

After months of renovations, the cats-only center opened January 2022. The center has a team of veterinary assistants and technicians. Mascots Lentil and Pinto (aka The Bean Brothers) are resident greeters and snuggle bugs.

Over the years, Dr. Jen has fine-tuned the mission of Crash's Landing to primarily helping adult street cats who are sick or injured. "The ones who need the most care," she said. "I'm in a unique position. I can do the work myself." The Center has a room set aside for cats from Crash and Big Sid's who need medical attention.

For more information on the Feline Wellness Center, 1545 Dimond Ave., NE, Grand Rapids, visit www.felinewellnesscenter.wordpress.com or follow them on Facebook. Or call 616-574-2733.

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Kate Hudson and Rani Rose

Pet Tales Rescue is a network of fosters and volunteers who work to find perfect homes for animals in need.

Our mission is to match pets with their forever family.

pettalesrescueboard@gmail.com
www.pettalesrescue.com

Kitten season started so much earlier than in previous years and we desperately need people to volunteer to foster pregnant cats, moms with kittens and litters of kittens left from feral moms. Also, anyone with experience with bottle feeding is also very much needed as we are seeing many more young orphaned kittens. Pet Tales Rescue has a support team with many years of experience in fostering kittens so don't think you will have to go it alone. We supply all the food, litter and medication the fosters will need in addition to getting them spayed/neutered, vaccinated and ready for their new home.

If you are interested in becoming a foster, please fill out the online application at www.pettalesrescue.com.



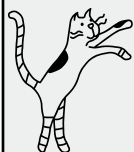
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Surgical Need Drives Expansion at the Allegan County Animal Shelter

By Janet Vormittag

Monday is surgery day at the Allegan County Animal Shelter. It's when cats and dogs available for adoption are spayed or neutered.

"It's insane how we operate here," said Susan Smith, the director of Wishbone Pet Rescue Alliance. The non-profit organization started managing the county shelter in 2011.

The shelter's surgical room is small and is also used for storage of surgical supplies. Pre-op and post-op for dogs is in an adoption room and for cats, it's in carriers on the floor of the shelter's lobby. The shelter is closed to the public on Mondays.

Once a month they try to offer a spay/neuter clinic for the public, but Susan said it's not enough, especially for cats.

During the COvid-19 shutdown veterinarians were only allowed to provide essential services. Unfortunately, spay/neuter wasn't considered essential. The result is an explosion of kittens. Susan said it will take years to catch up to the pre-pandemic level of intake for cats.

For years, Susan said she's been hounding county officials for an appropriate surgical room for the shelter, but there's never money for it. The current shelter was built in 2009-10 across the driveway from the old shelter, which is only suitable for storage.

Susan has considered raising money for an additional building, but Wishbone supporters won't commit to donating for a new shelter that would belong to the county. The concern is, if Wishbone's contract wasn't renewed the county would operate the shelter as they used to, which is to keep dogs for the state required hold period and then have them euthanized. Cat intake was limited and the majority of the cats were euthanized. The county's contact with Wishbone is up for renewal every three years.

Susan finally came upon a solution—bring in a modular building. If the county and Wishbone ever decide to part ways, Wishbone could take the building with them.

The plan is to have the modular building replace the old building that's used for storage. The animal shelter would operate out of two buildings—the current shelter and the modular building.

The county has tentatively agreed to remove the old structure, to provide a foundation and to have utilities brought to it.

Wishbone would be responsible for raising money to buy the modular building and to pay its operational expenses.



Above: The spay/neuter surgery room at the Allegan County Animal Shelter doubles as a storage room for surgical supplies. Vet tech Lori VanRywski (right) incubates a cat with medical caretaker Stephanie Keuning. Dr. Lisa Applegate (left) prepares for surgery.

Below: The lobby is used for pre-op and post-op for cats.



Susan said they're in the design stage. Besides a surgical suite, she's hoping to have two rooms for cats, a training room for dogs and two additional offices.

In the existing shelter, cats are housed near the dogs, which is stressful for them. By moving cats to the new building, it would open up additional space for dogs.

Another problem resulting from the pandemic, besides the overpopulation of kittens and cat, is a high number of dogs being surrendered that aren't socialized. The dogs, adopted as puppies during the pandemic, never had the opportunity to meet people or other dogs.

"The dogs aren't adoptable and we can't rehabilitate them due to our facility—it's too small," Susan explained.

Susan hopes to kick-off a capital campaign in the fall of 2022.

For more information about Wishbone Pet Rescue Alliance go to www.wishbonepetrescue.org or follow them on Facebook. For information on the Allegan County Animal Shelter visit www.alleganshelter.org.

You can visit the Wishbone House Thrift Store and Cat Adoption Center at 165 Blue Star Highway, Douglas, MI.

Rescue Tidbits

Pet Tales Rescue: URGENT NEED: We are in need of volunteers to foster dogs or cats. Pet Tales Rescue does not have a physical shelter—instead we're a network of volunteers who open our homes (or even just a room) to foster dogs/cats until they find a forever-home. We provide our foster homes with everything they need: crates, food, monthly preventatives, toys, medical care and other supplies. Fostering saves lives! We hope you'll help us save more! Please visit www.PetTalesRescue.com to fill out a foster application or ask any questions you may have. Thank you!

A Feral Haven is a growing organization that supports feral/community cats in Ottawa and Allegan counties by loaning traps, and providing spay/neuter vouchers and food. Volunteers needed: We are looking for two board members and several other volunteers to assist on an as-needed basis. Ideally, the board members would either have fundraising experience and/or customer service skills to assist with daily tasks. Members commit to 10-plus hours a month and a two-year term. Other volunteering opportunities include trap/carrier maintenance and caregiver assistance. Please email us what your volunteer interests are to get the process started: a.feral.haven.mi@gmail.com.

Michele's Rescue: Meet Scooter, the dog who loves everyone and everything! Sweetheart Scooter had a rough start to life, coming to Michigan as a stray from Kentucky. Despite living his first two years outside, Scooter's heart is as big as a house, and he loves being indoors with people too. He is potty and crate trained and is mastering basic obedience to impress his future human family. Scooter's an active pooch and is looking for an energetic soul or two who appreciates walks, runs, swims and hikes (followed by cuddles on the couch). Visit www.michelesrescue.com and fill out an application today.

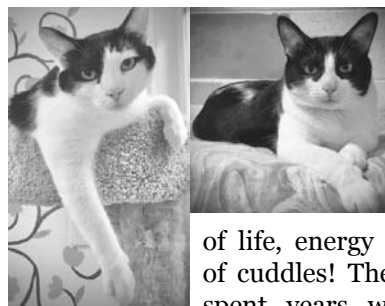


CSNIP is pleased to announce our 5th Annual Wags & Whiskers spaytacular event on Thursday, Oct. 20. Guests enjoy complimentary hors d'oeuvres, beer and wine, silent and live auctions, and an evening of fun activities such as wine and plush puppy pulls. Tickets are now on sale. Additionally, you can be involved by becoming a sponsor or by donating to our auctions. More information and ticket purchasing are available at <https://www.csnip.org/wags-whiskers>. Money raised is used to prevent pet overpopulation and improve the quality of life for dogs, cats, and their caregivers with accessible, affordable veterinary care.

West Michigan Ferret Connection does not adopt to anyone under 21. Ferrets do not exist to entertain a child, help you feel cool or relieve boredom. The WMFC does not adopt to renters. Many apartments don't allow ferrets. If you're housing insecure, so is your ferret. The WMFC does not adopt to households with children under 10 years. Very young children aren't coordinated enough to handle a fragile ferret. www.westmichiganferretconnection.com.

Fig and Friends Pet Rescue: Being a newer rescue, there are many ways you can help us. Do you want to foster puppies, kittens or a senior dog? Let us know! We collect returnable pop cans and bottles to help offset the cost of our vet bills. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram and share our posts. We are not only an Amazon Smile charity, but also have Amazon and Chewy wish lists. Send something from one of the lists! We take used pet supplies you no longer need. We'll take any cat or dog food, toys, crates, beds, etc. And, of course, we are looking for amazing adopters. For more information visit www.figandfriendspetrescue.org, email us at figandfriendspetrescue@gmail.com or call/text 616-320-2400.

Wishbone House: Scotch and Scooter are still waiting for their furever family. These brothers were returned to Wishbone House on July 28, 2021, after a death in their adopter's family. Born in June 2019, they spent their kittenhood at Wishbone House until their initial adoption in August 2020. They are handsome boys full



of life, energy and fun, along with lots of cuddles! These special brothers have spent years waiting for their furever family and home. Do you have room in your heart and home for two amazing cats? Wishbone House Thrift Store and Cat Adoption Center, 165 Blue Star Hwy, Douglas, MI. 269-455-5247

Wishbone Pet Rescue Alliance is a 501C3 non-profit that manages an Animal Control facility for the Allegan County Animal Shelter. Our mission is to alleviate the pain and suffering of homeless pets by providing shelter and veterinary care, and to ultimately secure permanent, loving homes for animals in need. With over 800 animals to save and rehome each year in Allegan County, Wishbone relies on donations and fund raisers from supporters like you. Wishbone must raise more than \$200,000.00 each year to save homeless animals. So every dollar donated helps! Wishbone Pet Rescue Alliance, P.O. Box 124, Douglas, MI 49406.

Pleasant Hearts Pet Food Pantry: FREE Microchip Clinic on Sept. 18, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Two pets per vehicle, first come, first served, 1539 Taylor Ave. N #5, Grand Rapids. MI 49505. www.pleasantheartspetfoodpantry.org.

Furry Philosophy



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

My soul dog, Odin J., now at the Rainbow Bridge was my greatest teacher.

Odin was very afraid of children. He taught me much more than any other teacher I have had over the years. I believe he wanted me to continue to help others like him live their best lives and educate in his honor. One of my biggest passions is to help children understand more about humane education and bite prevention. If more children and adults took the time to understand dogs like Odin and approach with patience and kindness, more dogs would live happier lives and less children would be bitten.

Statistically over one million dogs are euthanized every year because of a biting incident. More than 50 percent of those bites are face-to-face. What does that tell us?

We need to educate both adults and children, we especially need to educate children who are at eye level with pets.

Let's save some lives by prevention!

I don't believe a pet should lose its life because we, as adults, have not talked with children about running up and shoving their face in a dog or cat's face. I have heard many times from people, "My dog would never do that." or "That dog better not bite, no matter what my child does." I disagree; pets cannot verbalize when they are uncomfortable. What about the children? Shouldn't there be rules for them also? It is not fair to a dog to just let a child do as they wish. I believe, even the mildest of dogs, should not be left alone with small unpredictable children that may fall or pull hair in sensitive areas and set the dog up to fail.

We should teach our kids that every dog should be treated as a service dog. You, or your dog, do not approach that dog without asking and then using manners. Do not ride dogs like ponies, do not use them as foot stools. It hurts my heart to see a photo of a child having their face right in a dog's face, when I can clearly see the dog is uncomfortable. I think it's important we tell kids "stop running," but just like dogs, we need to tell them what we want them to do instead. Redirection is key. For example, instead of, "Don't run when the dog nips your pants," say, "Stop, hands up and 'be a tree.'" Both dogs and children like to be told what they can do instead of constantly hearing Charlie Brown's teacher's voice no, no, no, no.

I want to ensure our future leaders learn the respect they should have of the magnificent animals we are graced



Lexy Piehl having fun with her dogs.

to have in our lives. I want them to experience the magic of working together with a dog, as a team, with mutual respect and love and joy, playing fun sports or tricks and sharing the camaraderie with other dog parents, instead of always on their computer devices. I admire my 17-year-old friend Lexy Piehl, from the Critter in Gaylord. She is not only competing but also teaching agility. You can see the joy and fun her and her dogs are having together. I hope our younger generation can experience the confidence and joy I believe goes hand and hand. Lexy takes in rescue kitties and bunnies and is supported by her family. The message her parents instilled in her of philanthropy should be taught to more of the younger generation.

I would be happy to come share my message at local schools or through videos to schools. I also would be happy to chat with teachers or anyone else that wants to share that message. One by one, we can make a difference. I urge you, in honor of Odin and all precious creatures of this earth to instill the magic, the compassion, and joy of working and caring for another living being. I hope we can bring awareness to children to look up from their devices and into the eyes of an animal.





JODI JARVIS-THERRIAN
CPDT-KA, CTDI
DOG TRAINER
PET FIRST AID AND CPR
INSTRUCTOR

HELPING DOGS
LIVE THEIR BEST LIFE
IN HONOR OF MY SOUL DOG
ODIN J.

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On the Wild Side

with Allyson Swanson



Surprise, Surprise

Not much comes as a surprise after 20-plus years in wildlife rehabilitation. I may always be adapting to new situations, but it's more often than not a "new day, same story" sort of situation. Then, the universe surprises me yet again.

When I saw a photo of the fox kit, who we have come to know as Penny, I was astonished at the dark, moving wound on her head where an ear should have been. She was so scared and miserable that initially she allowed us to work on her without sedation. After working with her hands-on with our amazing veterinarian, Dr. Vincent, we determined it was most likely a dog or coyote attack that tore her ear completely off. Unfortunately, flies and maggots had already gotten to it, which added a level of complexity to her treatment. To some, a wound that severe would have seemed like a lost cause and euthanasia the only option. But when I heard Dr. Vincent say with confidence "we can fix this," that was all the encouragement I needed to begin planning Penny's journey with us.

It took a lot. Daily bandage changes (eventually including sedation as she began to feel better) and at least one procedure under anesthesia, but we were able to heal the wound completely over and manage to keep the ear canal open which will prevent larger health problems later. It was truly amazing to see her improve slowly, day-by-day, week-by-week but it was equally as wonderful to see her transformation from a scared and miserable fox kid, to a confident and beautiful vixen.

While her lack of ear makes her a poor candidate for release, we are pleased to announce that she has secured a position as an educational ambassador with our friends at Howell Nature Center.

We couldn't be happier, and I'm sure Penny feels the same!

Allyson Swanson is a Licensed Wildlife Rehabilitator with Wildlife Rehab Center Ltd, 1504 Union Ave NE, Grand Rapids. She has been licensed since 2013 but started as a volunteer over twenty years ago. Since then she has worked with countless species of birds and mammals and has become one of the main local resources for Virginia Opossums. She is also the Center's Education Coordinator and does presentations with their Educational Ambassador animals. allyson@wildlife-rehab-center.org – 616-606-5805

Training Tips

Doggie Boredom

By Bob Crough

It can sometimes be difficult to keep our dogs entertained during the day. Here are a couple ideas that I give to my training clients to bust the doggie boredom.

Cycle toys.

Most of you have a beat up wicker basket full of dog toys the dog doesn't play with regularly.

Take those toys and put them in seven categories for each day of the week (balls, squeekies, ropes, bones, treat puzzle toys, stuffed animals, and solve the problem day).

Once separated, only let the dog have one category on a specific day (Monday=balls). Then every Monday, for example, the dog will be very excited to have that favorite ball because they haven't had it since last Monday. This keeps the pup interested in his toys instead of your socks, shoes or dishtowels.

Another great idea is what I like to call *solve the problem*. It's a progressive, at the dog's speed, problem-solving exercise.

Start with a sit-stay. Place a treat on the floor. Then release the dog. The dog will happily walk over and eat the treat from the floor. Easy. The next time, start with a sit-stay, place the treat on the floor, then put a tea towel over the treat and release the dog. The dog will walk over and be faced with the problem and will have to somehow find a way to remove the towel to gain access to the treat. The next time, sit-stay the dog, place the treat on the floor, put the towel over the treat, then put a small box over the towel which is over the treat. I continue being creative and making the problem harder and harder to solve as the dog gets better and better at solving it. Soon you will have the treat around the corner, in the bedroom, where the dog has to nose open the door to get to the treat which has a towel over it, a box on top of that, etc. This type of game can be as creative as you make it. Think outside of the box and come up with your own progressive problems for your dog to solve and you can easily bust the daily boredom and monotony of the day and have a happier mentally healthier dog.

Bob Crough

Owner/Trainer Paradigm Dog School

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THE MUSKEGON HUMANE SOCIETY

New face with more services!



The Muskegon Humane Society (MHS) recently acquired Pay it Forward Outreach Animal Clinic. Prior to the asset purchase, the clinic was preparing to permanently close its doors. Knowing the community depends on its services, the Muskegon Humane Society stepped in. The clinic previously only offered wellness exams and vaccines, but we know the need of our community is much greater.

With our community's support, we are planning to add spay and neuter services, dental cleanings, and other desperately needed services. This clinic will not only be available to our community, it will also serve as a resource for other local rescues to receive the animal care they need to prepare animals for adoption.

This project depends on your support!

Upcoming Events!



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6 yr. old Hannah

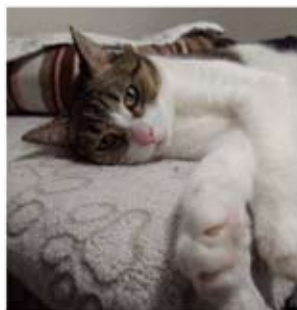


1.5 yr. old Tink (female)



Bonded Pair

Tiger – 2.5 yr. old (top) &
Junior – 3 yr. old (bottom)



6 yr. old Toby



1 yr. old Ranger (female)



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Mewsings

Making Time for Goodbye

By Kristina VanOss



Our family experienced three pet deaths this year, adding to the dozens more that preceded them in the past decades of pet stewardship. This heartbreak is just the price we pay for loving and being loved by souls with a life-span shorter than our own. After so many goodbyes, one would think the process of grieving would get easier. Yet, it doesn't seem to work that way, or at least not for me. Despite the variety of end-of-life scenarios we have gone through I still can't say which type of loss is harder—one that is sudden and unexpected or one I saw coming and prepared for. But I can say that at least with the latter comes the gift of time.

My beloved cat Lou, age 12, was diagnosed with terminal cancer several months ago. He was not in immediate pain and could function quite normally despite the small mass that was slowly growing under his jaw. The timeline was unpredictable. The vet treating Lou offered to prescribe pain medication at the first indication of suffering. I politely declined that option for fear of reaching the point where the pills could no longer do their job or so many would be required that there would be no quality of life for Lou. I could not in good conscience let my treasured friend live even briefly in agony—and *I knew he would be willing to do it*—just to stay with me. That was the kind of bond we had.

I knew that when the terrible pain came, it would be time to say goodbye.

Impending death is a good reminder to slow down, rearrange priorities, and try to live in the moment. This is a skill that animals successfully practice daily but we humans tend to struggle with, even when we know better. I was determined to not only know better *but do better* for Lou's sake, no matter how my heart was aching. After years of his devotion, I owed him that. In the final weeks of his life many of those mundane tasks of everyday existence lost their urgency. Each was weighed against the opportunity to spend what could be the last special moment we had. Consequently, I spent more time than usual sitting quietly with a book, a sketchpad, a notepad or just watching birds with Lou on my lap, purring, "making biscuits" on my knee, and giving me a running commentary on what he thought.

It was glorious, and special, and lasted far too short a time. While I savored Lou, he relished the extra attention that I borrowed from his housemates and other obligations. The mundane tasks fell a bit behind for a while, though I doubt anyone noticed.



There will always be mundane tasks. There will never be another Lou.

When an animal is dying, I always wish the matter would be decided without me. On rare occasions there have been natural peaceful ends. Given the circumstances, I knew this would not be one of those times. I was stuck with the unpleasant task of calling it quits. I tried to stay vigilant to the signs while still maintaining an atmosphere of calm and normalcy. It was the least I could do for someone I cared about, but especially for one who could not take matters into his own paws. When the day came, it was as if Lou and I both knew. He had started eating less and losing weight. His mass had grown to the size of half a tennis ball and was clearly bothering him by the way he rubbed at it. On that final day, my son and I spent a couple hours with Lou in the comfort of our living room. I will always remember how the morning sun sent prism refractions around the room and across Lou's back as he lay on my lap, purring and listening to our words of affection and gratitude.

Lou was surprisingly calm on his last journey to the vet. He received the sedative with ease and relaxed into it with us by his side. He left peacefully within seconds of the final injection. He was ready, even if I was not.

For everything animals give us, all the joy, entertainment, comfort, lessons learned, and pure, unconditional love returned to us when we care for an animal, the heartache of goodbye is not too high a price to pay. The heart, as it turns out, can withstand a tremendous amount of sorrow without missing a beat and without losing the slightest measure of love. A well-loved life has earned the time made for goodbye and in that goodbye there can be peace for everyone.

Kristina VanOss is an artist, writer, and life-long animal lover and advocate. Her latest endeavors include chronicling her adventures in cat rescue in an upcoming book due to be released later this year.

The Tyranny of Hindsight in Grief

By Ginny Mikita

Hindsight is not only clearer than perception-in-the-moment but also unfair to those [including ourselves] who actually lived through the moment. ~Edwin S. Shneidman

In all my years facilitating a companion animal loss grief support group, there has rarely been a gathering in which someone didn't begin a sentence with "if only" often coupled with anguished exclamations of personal responsibility, "I should've, could've, would've [fill in the blank]."

- If only I had noticed my dog was suffering, I would have euthanized her sooner. I should have consulted another veterinarian; I could have waited to euthanize him later.
- If only I hadn't left the house, I would have been home with my dog when she died.
- If only I hadn't left the basement door open, my cat wouldn't have drowned when the basement unexpectedly flooded.

What is Hindsight Bias?

Hindsight bias is the human phenomena of looking at events after the fact and noticing information not known at the time but consistent with the outcome. In other words, it is the tendency to perceive past events as having been more predictable than they actually were. For example, suicide loss survivors often blame themselves or others, leading to feelings of guilt and anger because - in hindsight - the signs seem obvious.

It is not surprising we humans have this tendency. We'd like to believe we have more control in our little worlds than we actually do. And in an effort to create a story to try to make sense of a tragic or sorrowful event, we often distort our memories of past events by selectively remembering information that confirms what we now know to be true.

What is the Problem with Hindsight Bias?

Hindsight bias makes processing a traumatic event more difficult than it already is because we tend to look back and blame ourselves for what happened. It is common to become fixated on the notion that "if only I had done this differently, then that wouldn't have happened." Hindsight bias makes us believe we knew more at the time than we did, even in the face of evidence we didn't. It can lead us to believe we made a poor decision and result in strong negative feelings of guilt and shame.

It brings us comfort to think the world is orderly and predictable. This can motivate us to see unpredictable events as predictable. Sometimes blaming ourselves is more comforting than accepting that disorderly and

unpredictable things over which we have little control can and do happen. For many, feeling like we have control - especially when it comes to our beloved companion animals - helps minimize our fears and anxieties...at least in our minds.

"Tyranny" is defined as "an act or the pattern of harsh, cruel and unfair control over another." The tyranny of hindsight occurs when our minds engage in an relenting pattern of harsh judgment and unfair control of our feelings toward ourselves because we wrongly believe - ironically - we had control over the circumstances of our underlying trauma to begin with.

Tips to Overcome Hindsight Bias

First, remind yourself you could not predict the future and you made the best, most loving decision in the moment given what you knew or believed to be true in that moment.

Second, because hindsight bias is revisionary and often distorted, when making tough decisions, consider writing down or sharing with someone else your discernment process or, after the fact, ask others to help you recall your thought process at the time of the decision. If neither of these are possible, consider the grace and assurance you would offer a friend in a similar situation, and offer it to yourself.

Finally, attend a Companion Animal Loss Grief Support Group and allow others to reflect back to you what was true at the time you made the decision you're now questioning and help you rediscover trust in your Inner Wisdom which has been guiding you all along.

The West Michigan Companion Animal Loss Grief Support Group meets on the second Tuesday evening of each month from 6:30 - 8 p.m. at Heaven at Home, 1530 Monroe NW, Grand Rapids, Michigan. All are warmly welcome. Please RSVP with Ginny (text or call 616.460.0373) before noon on the day of the gathering. Bring your grieving heart and photos/stories to share if you're comfortable. The Group is free; however, donations are gratefully received.



Ginny Mikita, JD, MDiv Candidate

www.animalblessings.love

ginny@animalblessings.love

616.460.0373

Facilitator

West Michigan Companion Animal
Loss Grief Support Group

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3. If you get caught stealing, divert attention and dance a jig.
4. Happiness is a great hidey-hole and a soft sleeping bag.
5. Know no fear.
6. Your socks are my socks.
7. Upon entering a room, walk the perimeter.
8. Hands off the stash.
9. Dance like no one is watching.
10. Play like there is no tomorrow.
11. For all around good health, poop often.
12. Rear-end. Corner. Reverse. Poop.



The West Michigan Ferret Connection is a 501c3 non-profit that has been advocating for Ferrets within and beyond Michigan since 2001 by providing rescue, surrender, adoption and education services.

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Fetch MI Home

A small group of women are making a huge difference in the lives of homeless dogs in West Michigan. They're part of the foster-based Fetch MI Home Animal Rescue that was founded by Kaitlin Mazer in September 2018. Kaitlin planned on closing the rescue last year when she had to move out-of-state, but one of her fosters, Kyra Troop, didn't want the rescue shutdown. She convinced her mom, Lori Troop, to talk to Kaitlin about taking over the rescue.

"We inherited a rescue," Lori joked. Lori is now the director of the non-profit, which primarily rescues dogs but occasionally takes in cats.

The group provides temporary homes for dogs from Michigan-based shelters with the majority of them coming from Pound Buddies Rescue in Muskegon and the Montcalm County Animal Shelter. The goal is to help reduce overcrowding and to provide an alternative option for dogs who struggle in a shelter setting.

Fetch MI Home has found homes for 32 dogs in the last 12 months.

"One of our biggest needs is more foster homes," Lori said. The group pays all the expenses involved in fostering including veterinarian care and food.

Lori added they also need board members. If interested you can contact them through their web site.

Currently the group has six people who foster, most have been fostering for various groups for years. Jill Benoit, the foster coordinator, has been fostering dogs for 11 years. Charlie, her 106th foster, was going to his home the next day. Jill explained that most people don't want to foster because they fear becoming attached to the dog and having a hard time letting it go. She looks at it differently. She finds it rewarding to see a dog she has fostered go to a great family.

A home visit is required before someone can adopt a dog from Fetch MI Home. "We want to find the perfect fit," Jill explained. Knowing a dog, that she has brought into her home and loved as much as she loves her own dogs, is going to a perfect home makes it easier to say good-bye.

"It's bittersweet, but then you can get another dog out the shelter," she said.

Another reason people say they can't foster is because they work full time. Dogs can be crated during the day, if needed. Jill said eight hours in a crate is better than 24 hours in a shelter.

Lori, who has fostered more than 60 dogs, said a lot of the dogs come with medical needs. For example, Dora had a hernia that needed surgery. She also needed to be spayed. The bill for both totaled close to \$1,800. The group pays the bills through adoption fees, donations and fund-raisers.

Dora came from a hoarding situation with 50 dogs. The English bulldog/pug mix was taken to a shelter where she had puppies. They suspect the 4-year-old was used for



Here are some of the women who foster dogs who need new homes. Left to right: Lori Troop and Dora, Jill Benoit and Charlie. Karen Machiorlatti-Waldron and Rosie, and Kyra Troop and Zola.

breeding. Dora is easily overstimulated—everything is new to her. "She was probably kept in a crate the majority of her life," Lori said.

Karen Machiorlatti-Waldron has been fostering for about eight years. She said about 30 percent of the dogs in shelters are purebreds. She adopted a long haired dachshund from a shelter.

Karen is currently fostering Zola and Rosie. Both dogs love to ride in cars, love kids and want a lot of loving. Zola, a beagle mix, was found as a stray in Montcalm County. "She's an awesome fun puppy," Karen said. Zola is about eight months old.

Rosie, a mixed breed, is about two years old. Rosie was at Pound Buddies for three months when she began to shut down and wouldn't eat. "She was struggling," Karen explained. In a shelter setting, dogs spend the majority of their time in a kennel. "Dogs are companion animals. They're social. She just needed out."

Rosie is an active dog who loves playing with other dogs and going for walks. She's not crated because she's trustworthy and doesn't have accidents.

The first dog Karen fostered was a super sweet pit bull/cattle dog mix named Beauty. "That started the adventure," she said. Karen cried when Beauty was adopted. "If you have a heart, you're going to have feelings when you let them go."

While fostering saves the lives of dogs, it can also be beneficial to people. "You meet good people and you make friends," Jill said. Another bonus is receiving updates, or *pup-dates*, about the dogs that have been fostered. "It's so rewarding—seeing them living their best lives."

"That's why we foster," Karen added.

For more information about Fetch MI Home visit www.fetchmihome.org or follow them on Facebook and Instagram. You can see the dogs Fetch MI Home has available for adoption on their website, on Petfinder.com, and on their Facebook page. They do adoptions at Chow Hound in Standale, 4482 Lake Michigan Dr., on the last Saturday of the month, noon to 2 p.m.

CANNONSVILLE CRITTERS

FALL NEWSLETTER



Rescue is a Team Effort *"Team KITTY"*

On behalf of Cannonsville Critters we would like to thank EVERYONE for all of their time, efforts, and talents. ALL of you are very important to the success of Cannonsville Critters and rescue in general.

However, true of all rescue work, and just work in general. There are sometimes personality conflicts. When there are many people involved there ARE going to be clashing personalities. It is IMPORTANT that we all keep focused on our priorities the RESCUE, CARE, and ADOPTION of cats and kittens. The only way for a rescue to be successful at their mission is to stay UNITED and NOT divided. Rescues are blessed with wonderful volunteers, supporters, donors, fosters, etc., and we ALL need to stay united on this front, through the conflicts, trials, hardships.. ALL of you are needed and your individual and special talents. We are a Rescue Body made up of many parts (people) and every part has a purpose and is essential to the Body as a Whole. WE praise and thank each of our fellow rescues also. Take HEART, we need YOU, and the cats and kittens desperately need you. This work is a TEAM effort and everyone is essential.

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Community Resource Guide

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a.feral.haven.mi@gmail.com

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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

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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

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Cannonsville Critters

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989-287-2553 - www.cannonsvillecritters.org

Headin' Home Pet Rescue, Inc.

185 Panther Dr., Holland, MI 49424
616-886-1474 - headinhomerescue@sbcglobal.net
www.headinhomerescue.org

Hearts of Hope Dog Rescue

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www.rescueofhope.com

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231-798-4935 - michelesrescue@gmail.com
<https://michelesrescue.com>

Muskegon Humane Society - a no kill, non-profit shelter

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

Continued on page 22

Community Resource Guide

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
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www.reubensroom.org
catrescuereubensroom@gmail.com

The Next Chapter Pet Rescue

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616-606-0911 - nextchapterpetrescue@gmail.com
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West Michigan Ferret Connection

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Our Readers Write

Homing Instinct

By Carol Tanis

My family has had several cats throughout the years, but one stands out because she refused to let us go, even when we let her go. She was a stray who appeared at our door. My siblings and I began feeding her and we chimed to mom and dad, “May we keep her?” Her coloring was not particularly attractive. The fur on her face was two-toned and shaped unevenly. But as unattractive as her appearance was, she made up for it with her endearing affection for us right from the start. Mom and dad allowed us to keep her, and we named her Mama Cat.

During the next several years my parents were saving money and slowly making plans to build a new house. It would include four bedrooms, full bathrooms downstairs and upstairs, a large living room, family room and den. My mother made the decision, and we went along with her feeling, that the new house would be too nice for Mama Cat. The cat would go to live at my aunt and uncle’s farm, about three-quarters of a mile from our new house.

One Saturday some weeks before we were to move in, my sister put Mama Cat in the car and drove to the new house to do some work inside. All afternoon my sister did her work in the house and the cat explored the inside. Moving day came and we moved in, all except for Mama Cat, who was moved to the farm.

I was thrilled with our new surroundings, but I missed Mama Cat. Yet, I wanted to respect my parents’ wishes. During the next couple of weeks, we received word from my cousin of sightings of Mama Cat near the barn. My cousin mentioned that her dog had a scratch on her nose, most likely an indication that she got too close to Mama Cat.

Then it happened. One rainy night we were watching TV in the family room, which had sliding glass doors

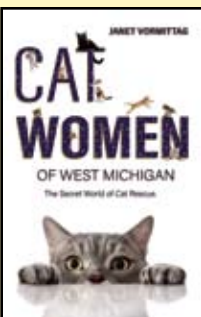


The portrait of Mama Cat that hung in the family’s living room.

leading outside to the patio. There through the glass we saw our wet Mama Cat! We all shouted and one of us immediately opened the door to let her in. We towed her down and gave her some food and water. My sibs and I said to mom and dad, “We have to keep her now since she searched so hard to find us!” Mom and dad agreed.

I’ve read cats have a homing instinct. Somehow, they can perceive direction by tapping into something beyond our knowledge. In our case our cat knew that home was not just a structure, but a place where the people lived who loved her and cared for her. To make this journey to our new house, she would have had to cross a busy road and some hills and valleys—new territory where she likely had never been before. My sister painted a portrait of Mama Cat and my mother hung it in the living room. Mama Cat’s portrait was the only family member to occupy a wall in the most formal room in the house. She lived and was loved in the new house for more than a decade.

Cat Women of West Michigan *The Secret World of Cat Rescue*



Available
Fall 2022

When does $1 + 1 \times 3 = 50$?

Perhaps it works better as a story problem. If you add a female cat to a male cat, and then multiply the results by three years, how many cats and kittens might you have? Cats are prolific. It’s possible for two unaltered cats and their offspring to produce 50 or more kittens in three years. It’s not uncommon for cat rescues to receive phone calls such as this, “A stray cat showed up in our yard three years ago. Now we’re overrun with cats and kittens. We need help.”

Enter the super heroes of cat rescue—women. In West Michigan, every cat rescue is headed by a woman. Women also work the frontline—they live-trap cats, transport them for spay/neuter surgeries, provide foster homes, do adoptions, fund-raise, and answer the calls for injured cats, strays and unwanted litters of kittens.

In this collection of short stories, you’ll meet women who devote their spare time, sometimes their entire lives, to helping cats.

Every Pet's Life Tells a Story...



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