

Strays with unknown history are euthanized by most places if they test positive for FIV. However, cats will test positive due to having been vaccinated for FIV even though they do not have the disease. They also test positive when they might still successfully fight off the virus. Standard tests look for a cat's antibodies. Kittens may have antibodies from their mother's milk but not be infected. These kittens and cats may well prove healthy if retested.

A more accurate test has been developed which looks for the virus itself, the viral DNA, rather than looking for the cat's antibodies. This test has been refined until, by March 2010, it claimed a very high degree of accuracy. It's a pricey test. But the shelter exists to help animals, and the cost of lifelong care would be greater than the cost of the test. When this new test is used in conjunction with antibody tests, infection status can be quite accurately determined.

Toopy came to Katie's Place positive for FeLV. Subsequent testing found her free of the virus. This lovable pet was adopted by one of the vet techs at the clinic where the last test was done. As a plain black cat, she could have waited for a home for a long time. With

FeLV, her odds of adoption would have dropped considerably. Toopy and Jennifer are only two of several Katie's Place cats who proved negative for the viruses after subsequent testing. It's well worth getting a different test done if you have a cat who tests positive for FIV or FeLV.



Apache and Kat King Cole both tested positive for FeLV. Both proved negative after repeat testing. They became friends and wrestling buddies in their new communal room. Both have been adopted.

Katie's Place Animal Shelter

Katie's Place, established 2001, is a nonprofit, no-kill, volunteer-run shelter in Maple Ridge. We rescue, alter and adopt out homeless small animals.

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Shelter address: 10255 Jackson Road, Maple Ridge

Mailing address: 10255 Jackson Road, Maple Ridge, B.C. V2W 1G5

Open Hours: Sat. & Sun. 12:00 noon - 2:00 pm

Website: www.katiesplace.petfinder.com

Charitable Registration

Number: 86250 6037 RR0001

In Memoriam and Tribute

We gratefully acknowledge gifts to Katie's Place

from the Sterile Processing Department of Ridge Meadows Hospital in memory of
Twinkles

from Anne White in memory of
Sly

from Marion Brunner in memory of
Don Hagerup

from Olga Cabrera in memory of
John Dundas

from Mitsubishi Canada Ltd. in memory of
M. Konesky

from D.E. in memory of
Quinn Hylton-Foster

from Sarah in memory of
Quinn

from Helen Hylton-Foster in memory of
Quinn and Honey

from the staff at Maple Ridge Veterinary Hospital in memory of
Karli Tremblay

from Thursday Ladies Bridge Club in memory of
Bobbie Cook

from Diane Humphries in memory of
Margaret Konesky

from Adam Mechler in memory of
Margaret Konesky

from Jill Smith in memory of
Margaret Konesky

from Elwyn and Sylvia Tompkins in memory of
Margaret Konesky

from Ivor and Maureen Frederiksen in memory of
Margaret Konesky

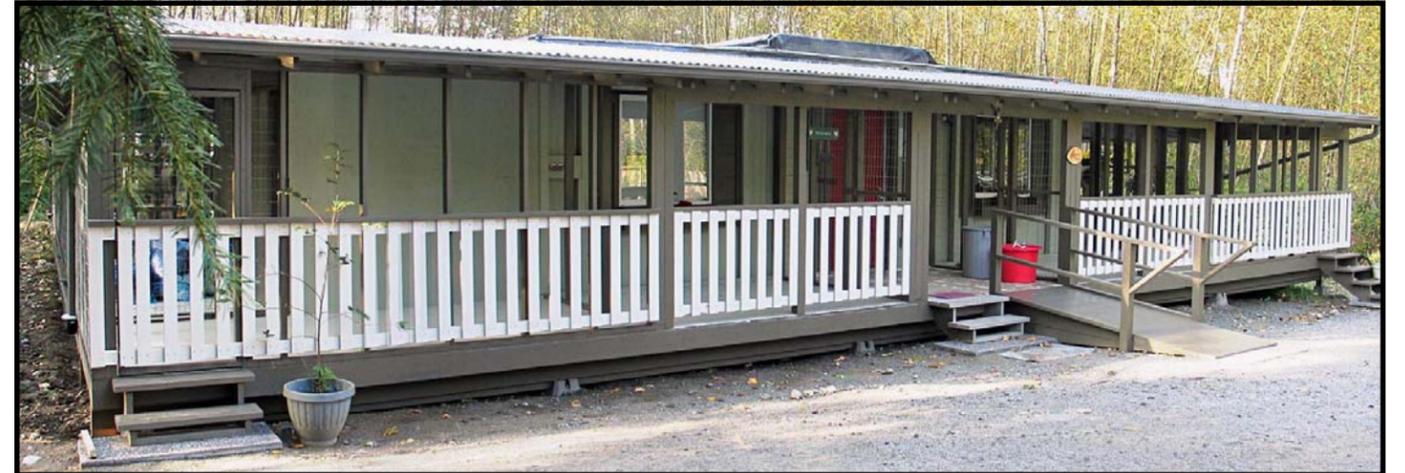
from Mary-Ello Segar in memory of
Margaret Konesky

from On-Site Fleet Services and Lisa and Paul Ogara in memory of
Hobie

from Irene Shultz and Keiko in memory of
Leisha

Katie's Place Animal Shelter

OCTOBER 2011



Katie's Place Reaches Decade Milestone

Katie's Place turned ten years old this year and we're celebrating with a birthday party at the shelter.

Join us on Saturday October 29 from 12 noon to 5 pm for some refreshments and to look around the shelter that has been home for our critters since autumn 2008.

We celebrated the grand opening of our new facility in September 2008 and in November the animals took up residence in their shiny new shelter. They approved. Nine communal rooms with spacious attached porches replaced the four main communal rooms they had shared in our old barn. A first-rate HVAC system keeps them warm in winter and cool in summer, replacing the small space heaters and fans we used at the barn. Most of the animals from then have moved on, but we volunteers will always remember our old barn with love.

That barn, loaned to us by a kind family, gave us our start when the first few homeless cats found safety there in 2001. We washed dishes in a bucket on the floor until we got a sink set up by the pump outside. We had to bring hot water from home in winter



because the pump would freeze. Somehow the hardship brought us together, and seeing the lives we were saving spurred

us on. Still, we never dreamed we could accomplish what we have. Since those first days in 2001 when a dozen cats lived at the barn, we have saved 3,400 cats and kittens, and found homes for 2,130. Of the ones not adopted, some have stayed with us (either at the shelter or in foster situations), some have gone to our safe feral area (when it's become apparent they will never 'settle' and be comfortable in close contact with humans), and some have passed away despite being given the best possible care from the amazing Veterinarians we work with.

The barn was a makeshift shelter, built from donated and scavenged items. Yet it was a special place that drew people to it. What set it apart was the love invested in it - the love of the volunteers, supporters and adopters working together to rescue animals from the brink.

Our new shelter isn't a state-of-the-art, professional-quality building although it offers more than the barn. Yet despite its limitations it makes people and animals feel at home. It has a lived-in look and feel that helps put homeless pets at ease. They respond to its homelike quality. They recognize the love of those who look after them and they recover from injuries, fear and lost trust to become highly adoptable pets.

We've been rewarded to see so many lives turned around over the last decade. We look forward to seeing a lot more such victories in the years to come. We hope you'll be there too and celebrate many more birthdays with us.



Celebrating Our Hall Cats

As anyone who visits Katie's Place will know, the main living spaces for our 120-odd cats are a series of nine pens which have both indoor and outside porch space for the felines to enjoy.

But there are a few cats who haven't adapted well to that arrangement and who, therefore, have managed to make a home in our hallway and associated open spaces. This often makes them the first furry presences that our visitors encounter on dropping by the shelter on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon.

One excellent example is Bobbi MaGee, a beautiful long-haired calico girl who came to us two and a half years ago at the age of 11 years. She arrived with a diagnosis of diabetes and was being medicated by insulin shots. Whether this was a reason or not, her first few months with us showed her to be a cranky cat who hissed at most other cats, scowled and growled at volunteers, lashed out and, in short, did all the things that didn't make her a prime candidate for adoption. It got so that she didn't like to see any of her medicators coming towards her with that insulin needle. Eventually, with the help of our veterinary advisors, the diagnosis of diabetes was turned around and the crankiness began falling away. But she still disliked the other cats in her pen and the idea emerged that she might be better off in the larger space of the hallway corridor. This definitely proved to be the case and she thrived in the role of hall cat, serving as official greeter and 'watch-cat' in a chair set beside the main entrance door. As time went by, she began seeking pats and cuddles, purring at or even before each touch. She has transformed herself from a growly curmudgeon into a smiling (okay, cats can't smile!) and happy presence. She has endeared herself to all comers since she became a hall cat and this is well worth celebrating.



Bobbi Magee has always ruled the front part of the hall by the main entrance where she's kept an eye on comings and goings.

Then there is Marty, a short-haired black male who came to us in January 2010 after having lived for 10 years as a single companion to an older woman who had to move into a care facility and couldn't take her feline buddy with her. Once Marty got to Katie's Place, it became clear that he had not had much exposure to other cats and he didn't much like seeing so many of them in this scary new place. He was

ready to take on anyone that he didn't take a liking to, which was virtually everyone he met! So he too became a hall cat and soon basked in the freedom, even if he did have to share that status and space with a couple of others. It was still better than the ten or twelve competitors he faced in one of the pens. Mind you, he can still be a bit of a thug if any wayward cat from a pen is brash or foolish enough to wander into his territory. But he has worked out a truce with his two hall-mates, Bobbi MaGee and Nub, both of whom showed more than enough chutzpah to stare him down and demand equal time. Marty chooses to patrol the kitchen area as his own territory and recently saw the arrival of a 'house' designated especially for him. He thinks it is really cool (nothing less, of course, for a black-coated 'cool cat' like him) – certainly a reason for celebrating him as well.



Marty is king of the kitchen and hangs out in our office space there.

That brings us to Nub, the third and most recent of our hallway arrivals. She came to us in March 2010 at 15 years old: a medium-hair white and black Manx. She actually started off her Katie's Place residency as a hall cat, never having to spend any time in a pen. This is because she showed up with a case of incontinence, leaving quite a few puddles and droppings in her wake. But her status as a hall cat seems to have helped with her ailment and she has thrived in the wide-open spaces of the corridor, adopting as her own special spot one of the loveseats set there, ostensibly, for human visitors. From that perch she won't let any wayward interlopers feel at all comfortable

Nubby owns the area at the back of the hall around the loveseat - and she particularly owns the loveseat!



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Celebrating Our Hall Cats

and, even though she is the smallest of the hall cats, her feisty attitude and sharp claws deal with any other feline brash enough to try to enter her air space. As with many cats who arrive at the shelter with health problems of one sort or another, the loving and caring they receive leads to a sense of mutual trust which can be happy medicine for whatever their condition might have been. This seems very much to be the case with Nub; her incontinence seems to have gone into reverse. She is thriving in the hallway and loves all the attention she gets from Saturday and Sunday open house visitors and, of course, from the volunteers every day of the week. She has always been a cute little thing and now has a happy outlook on the world. That's good enough reason to celebrate this hall cat as well.

Breakthrough in Testing for Diseases

The family that found Jennifer, a homeless tabby, wanted to keep her. She was "very sweet and affectionate" and was good with their toddlers. But she tested positive for Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) so she had to come to Katie's Place. This virus (similar to human HIV) is contagious to other cats and there's no cure. Only two or three shelters in the province accommodate cats with FIV and Feline Leukemia. Elsewhere, Jennifer would have been euthanized. Katie's Place kept her segregated until she could be retested with a more conclusive test. In the end, she proved healthy.

Jennifer had likely been exposed to the virus and tested positive because she was fighting it off. Released into a communal room at the shelter, she ran around excitedly, poking into everything with high spirits. She's a loving, gentle, playful cat whose chances of adoption increased dramatically once she was cleared of the FIV diagnosis. Jennifer was not a rare case. **According to one study of the standard test, 20 percent of positive results are false.**



Jennifer came to us testing positive for FIV. Repeat testing found her to be negative. Released from segregation into a communal room, she was like a kid at Christmas as she played with all the toys and cat trees. She has been adopted now.

But, most of all, let's go back to the beginning of this piece and make a special celebration of the life of Bobbi McGee. Earlier this fall she was diagnosed with an inoperable abdominal tumour. As of this newsletter she is still active and enjoying life. She gets extra treats and TLC from all her Katie's Place 'family' and will be loved and cared for as long as she's with us. There is always a sense of sadness attached to losing a friend like this one. But we can also celebrate how well she has done in her closing years as a Katie's Place hall cat.

FIV and Feline Leukemia (FeLV) are similar viruses which compromise a cat's immune system. The cats can lead healthy lives for some time. Eventually they succumb to illness when their immune system can no longer fight. FeLV is more virulent with a shorter life expectancy. It affects up to three percent of cats. Only cats get it. It's transmitted via bodily fluid, mainly by bites during fighting.



Chase came to us because she tested positive for FeLV. She was one of the first cats we retested and this young cat proved to be healthy. she has a new home now.

FIV affects up to four percent of cats (again, only cats). It also is contracted through bites during fights. However, while FeLV can also be passed on via shared bowls, litter pans or grooming, FIV is unlikely to be passed on unless cats have huge fights. FIV positive cats can live as long as uninfected cats - well into their teens. At Katie's Place, Frankie in the special needs room was nearly 14 when he passed away. Barclay is going on 11 and is as robust as any cat. This is noteworthy since they're at greater risk for illness because of living at a shelter. The volunteers take precautions, but when dealing with living creatures nothing is guaranteed.

Testing for the FIV and FeLV viruses also came with no guarantees, and researchers have worked to improve the tests. Complicating matters, the infections are not passed on by every bite from an infected cat. **The FeLV infection, for example, takes hold only 30 percent of the time.**