



"The Kennel of Hope"

Tails of Hope

The Newsletter of Animals in Distress
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The Most Precious Gift

Have you been caught up in all the holiday craziness yet? All the advertisements, appeals from various organizations, **and pressure to buy, buy, buy...** The Christmas specials on television, all the holiday events everywhere, the beautiful Christmas lights, and an endless stream of commercials and ads...these define the holidays for many people.

As we get older, sometimes we realize that the holidays are a mixed blessing. Some of our loved ones have passed **away, sometimes family is at a distance and can't get** together, sometimes illness makes it impossible to participate in a lot of the festivities.

You may ask what all of that has to do with a Christmas newsletter from an animal sanctuary. Well, here is how we connect the dots.

First of all, no matter what holiday you are celebrating at this time of the year, there is a mixture of messages. Hope, love, community, generosity, togetherness, lots of positive feelings are expected to be honored and celebrated at this **time of the year. But not everybody is celebrating. Let's** focus on animals in shelters at the holidays. Sadly, for most of them, the holidays are just another day. Some of them, who have had homes for many years, find themselves without their family, without their home, without their bedding and toys, without anything that makes them feel loved and special. How terribly sad.

We're not going to be sending our friends any mailing labels, or T-shirts, or calendars. All of our money goes directly to our rescued animals for their care. But we are going to be sending you the most precious Christmas gift of all—Love. The animals that you helped save throughout the year, those who would have no life at all without all of us, are going to be celebrating the holidays in a place where they feel as if they have a home. Home is a very precious word, because it means a place where you are welcome and where you are safe. Where you have peace. **Where you don't have to go hungry or be cold or afraid.** Where you know love.

We decided to share with you a few of the animals who now call Animals in Distress their home. These animals do not have homes of their own, but they have a home. They have love. They have peace. They know that they matter.

We are going to highlight some of the older animals in this newsletter because somehow, in our culture, old age has become a negative. In fact, in many shelters and rescues, animals over a certain age are either euthanized, or given away for free. Whoever decided that old age made someone worthless? Whoever decided that old age means you are less deserving? Less lovable?

So we have decided to share some of the happy stories that had sad beginnings. The only reason these animals are celebrating holiday festivities this season is because of **you. And this special feeling isn't something that happens** only at this time of year because we—with your help—have been saving animals all year. Every day. And some of our friends who have been with us a long time have been saving animals for decades. You cannot even imagine the number of lives you they have touched.

We hope you enjoy these pictures and stories because they reflect what we are all about. Since the day we were founded back in 1977, our philosophy and practice have remained the same. Every animal rescued has a home with us for the rest of its life, unless we can find the perfect **home for it with a loving family. We haven't changed any of** that philosophy or practice. But the only way we can do our work is because people like you care.

So consider this newsletter as our Christmas gift to you. You have given the gift of life to so many. And your kindness has made a huge difference. You will never know how much we appreciate your love, prayers, and support. We want you to know that you are loved more than you can possibly imagine. If the animals in our sanctuary could talk, they would tell you how much you mean to them. You allow them to have a home, love, peace, and life. When others have forgotten and abandoned them, they have been saved because of you and your support of Animals in Distress.

You can't buy that kind of gift in a store or online at Amazon or some other vendor. That is a gift that comes from the heart. That is really what this holiday season **celebrates. Nobody cares what kind of shoes you're buying or what kind of electronics you're giving as gifts. What** matters, in the long run, is your kindness and your love for your fellow creatures. That is truly living the spirit of the holidays.

And you do it every day of the year.

Our friends at Jack Lehr Heating, Cooling and Electric had a very successful Cutest Cat Contest on Facebook.

They received hundreds of entries, each one 'cuter' than the next.

There was no fee to enter the contests, so everybody could get involved who wanted to.

The selection of the winner was done by "votes" ("likes" on Facebook). The winner who received the most likes was Captain Crunch, owned by Robin Slifer.

As they did with the Cutest Dog Contest, Jack Lehr donated \$2,000 to Animals in Distress in honor of the winner. ONE FOOTNOTE: The winner of this year's Cutest Dog Contest is named Cocopuff. Do you see a trend emerging with names of breakfast cereals??



The Winner 

This was no paint-by-numbers event!!

MTM Financial *Invest in You* women's group hosted their own version of 'paint and sip' called "Art, Bark, and Meow" at Animals in Distress on October 29. Participants were instructed by Margie Kavchok on how to do an animal-themed watercolor pencil art project. Participants also got to visit with some of the shelter's furry residents.

Participants were asked to bring a donation, which could be monetary or from the shelter's Wish List.

\$575 in cash was raised as well as many items donated, including food, cleaning supplies, pet toys, etc.



Also, the Key Club from William Allen High School helped the cause by doing a collection in support of the event. It's always nice when young people get involved in doing good deeds in the community. Thanks to Mary DiFebo for organizing that.

Everyone had a fun time and some even discovered their hidden artistic talents.



Thanks for thinking of us!!





Holiday Fun and Fund-raisers

100% of the proceeds benefit the no-kill sanctuary

ANIMALS IN DISTRESS

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Happy Holidays Craft and Gift Bazaar Every Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 4 pm.

*Please stop by and do some last minute shopping, while also enjoying one of the area's greatest gift selections featuring cats and dogs. New items are added constantly. After December 25, there will be a discount on all holiday items. **Don't worry** about all the news reports of store shelves being empty and deliveries being held up on the docks. We have a lot of great items, many one-of-a-kind, so you can spend your money and save animals. You can avoid the stress of wondering when and if you can find just that special item that's being promoted during the holiday buying frenzy.*

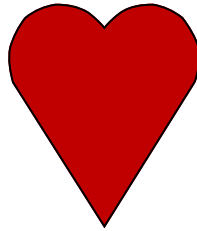
Also, in our **Holiday Tribute Program**, you can share your love in our Hospitality Center through poinsettia, ornament, & wreath tributes and memorials for people and pets –and we notify the recipients so you don't have to!

And you also have an option of giving a sponsorship of one of our shelter animals as a gift (that's the gift that keeps on giving all year)—in our **Take-A-Pet-To-Dinner program**.

Complete information on both holiday gift programs and forms are in last month's newsletter and also available on our website, animalsindistresspa.org.

If you're a last minute gift giver, include the email address of the recipients so we can let them know of your thoughtfulness. That way, even if the USPS mail is slow, the announcement of your gift will be received on time.

Some of the Senior Cats Spending the Holidays at Animals in Distress

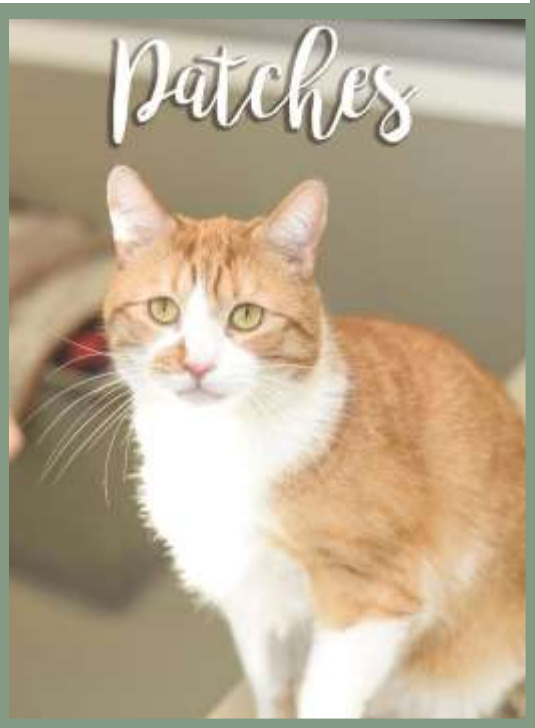


Willow is 15 years old and beautiful. She was rescued with her litter of kittens, who were found abandoned at a lake, when she was two years old. All the babies were adopted, but Willow never found her forever home. She is very affectionate and loves attention and cuddles.

Patches is a 12 year old, super friendly, orange and white cat. He was abandoned, left to die, in a cat carrier. He has been with us since he was two years old. He is FIV positive, which means that he has an immune system weakness. But he can live a normal life. He is on a special urinary diet because there's some crystals in his urine. He absolutely loves people, loves being brushed and fussed over, and loves the other cats in his room.



Milton originally came to us as one of three tiny kittens, 8 years ago. After being cared for in a foster home, all three kittens were adopted. Unfortunately, Milton's owner died last year, and Milton came back to the shelter. Our promise to all our animals is that they will always be part of our family and will always have a home with us no matter how many years pass since they were adopted. He loves people and would probably prefer to be the only cat in the home. He is very affectionate and loves lying on the window sill watching the world go by.



Angel and Dickens came to us eight years ago as two of a litter of 4 tiny kittens abandoned during the holidays. The two females in the litter got adopted when they were still young kittens. Dickens had to have eye surgery so could not be adopted for quite a while. He and his sister Angel love hanging out together. We would love to see them adopted together. They both have a very unique quality: both of them have one green eye and one blue eye.

Some of the Senior Dogs Spending the Holidays at Animals in Distress



Stella, a French bulldog mix, has been through hell and back, but has remained a sweet and loving soul. At almost 10 years of age, she has survived abuse, neglect, and abandonment. Despite all of her injuries when we rescued her, she has never shown any aggression or resistance to the treatment and recovery protocols that she had to endure. She is a sweet soul, whose heart is forgiving and loving.



Teddy, on the left, and Casey have never really had a real home. Someone brought them here from Guatemala, where they were dying puppies. They lived in a kennel until their rescuer died, and then they lived in a kennel for several years after that. Then the owner of that kennel died, and they were scheduled to be euthanized. Animals in Distress offered them a home for the last few years, and they are now about 10 years old. Teddy, a brown and white spaniel mix of some kind, is more shy and reserved. His sister, Casey, is much more outgoing and a bit pushy. She's always the first to get petted, ask for a treat, etc. And her brother indulges her because he's such a sweetheart.

They probably would do best as the only dogs in the house. It would be quite a Christmas miracle if the right home could be found for these two. They really are so loving and have never really known what a loving home of their own is like.



Cocoa is a rescue who had been neglected and then abandoned. She loves attention and would prefer to be the only dog in the home. **She's about 7 years old** and in her prime. Housebroken and very intelligent, she's ideal for an adults only home because **she's happy hanging out on the sofa or going for a leisurely walk.**



Zoe on the left and Krissy have been together their whole lives, almost 10 years. They lost their loving home when their owner died. Zoe is a Great Pyrenees mix, and Krissy is a miniature pincher mix. Both dogs are super affectionate with their family, but tend to be a bit territorial around other dogs. They definitely have a live and let live philosophy. Both dogs have impeccable house manners, and are very alert and are excellent watchdogs. Krissy is diabetic and needs to have insulin twice a day.



Major is all dressed up for the holidays. He actually enjoys being dressed up because he likes all the extra attention.

He's approaching nine years old, and would really enjoy a home of his own. When rescued, he was full of wounds and sores. Because he was abandoned, we never knew his history, but suspect he may have been abused or possibly used as a bait dog.

Major would be very happy to lie on the sofa, and watch a football game.

He also doesn't mind a short walk, but he is definitely not into hiking and jumping and all that physical stuff. **He's** more of a lover than anything else.

We would recommend him for an adults only home without other pets.

MEET GRIGIO:

He's VERY happy to be Alive!

One of the most puzzling aspects of animal rescue involves animals who have been owned by people for years. Many of these animals have been with their family since they were puppies and kittens. Most of us know how attached we become to our pets, so it becomes problematic when someone decides to euthanize a healthy animal who has been a member of their family for a long time, especially when the animal has no terminal illness. Here's what happened with a silver lab we named Grigio.

We received a panicked phone call from a veterinary staff person who pleaded for help in rescuing a five-year-old lab. The poor dog's family had decided to euthanize him. The veterinarian and staff were horrified at this request, and were hoping to find an alternative to putting the dog down. By the way, they absolutely refused to put it down, but were afraid to just send the owner away because there was no telling what the owner would do with the dog or to the dog.

The stated reason by the owners for putting Grigio to death was that they were tired of dealing with his skin allergies. Otherwise, he was a loving and friendly dog. They were just retired of dealing with his one, totally treatable problem.

When we admitted Grigio, we were really surprised to see that his condition wasn't all that bad. In fact, he had so many fleas that we felt strongly that the real problem was the fleas biting him and irritating his skin. There was no way the owners could not have seen the fleas. The skin condition excuse was simply a rationalization to justify euthanizing a young and perfect healthy dog.

Grigio has made a wonderful recovery from the skin problem and is absolutely one of the most pleasant dogs we have ever had. He loves everyone. Loves to play, loves to cuddle, just loves life. The thought of him being destroyed breaks our heart, because there are so many animals who never get the help they need in time.

As we repeatedly say, our commitment is forever to every animal that we rescue. Sometimes, those animals have ongoing health issues, like diabetes or blindness. But those are not reasons to kill those animals. Sometimes, animals like some featured in this December newsletter, are older. Sadly, older animals are discriminated against in the rescue world because the assumption is that most people won't adopt an older animal.

We are so pleased to report how well Grigio is doing. More importantly, we offer his story and the stories of the other animals featured in this newsletter as examples of the work that we do. The lives that we saved. The hope that we offer to those who have been forgotten by others.

Never forget that you, our friends, make all this possible. And the best part is that the animals seem to know that they are safe and loved.



Grigio is very happy to be spending the holidays—and as long as necessary to find him a FOREVER home—with people who will never abandon him. He is safe—and loved. *Best of all, he knows it!*



Enclosed is my donation of \$_____ to keep Hope and Love alive at Animals in Distress, for pets like Grigio, Pilgrim, Sweet Potato, Willow, Stella, Zoe, Cocoa, and so many others.

Name _____

Address _____

Credit Card Info: **

Number _____

Name on card _____

Expiration date _____

Signature _____

** MC, Visa, & Discover only

Check this box if you do NOT want a receipt mailed to you.

Thank you for caring for those without a voice.



A Rescue that Warms the Heart

The next rescue story we wanted to share involves two kittens that came in at Thanksgiving time. They had been living under a shed in a very nice lady's backyard, and she had been feeding the mother cat. When the mother disappeared, the nice lady was keeping an eye on the kittens, but got really concerned as the weather got colder and life-threatening. The kittens were not socialized around people, so one of the big challenges was to befriend them to the point where she could get them into a cage.



The first picture we are showing to the left is of the kittens just after they arrived at the shelter. You can see by the looks on their faces that they are terrified. They don't know who to trust or what to expect.

A couple of weeks later, the kittens are learning to trust humans and are much more relaxed. However, notice how watchful they are. They can't forget how scared they

were and how alone they felt when their mom didn't come back to them.

Rescue people live for these moment when we see a scared and hurting animal start to trust again. Their body posture relaxes, and they soften the panicked look in their eyes. Those of us in rescue live for that transformation. We know that animal is going to blossom in our care. We know that our firm commitment to love and kindness and hope is being felt by those scared animals. We all need a home, a place where we feel safe. And that is exactly we provide at our Kennel of Hope, every day of the year.

Peace to All Creatures Great and Small



Sweet Potato

Pilgrim

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DATED MATERIAL . . . PLEASE RUSH

Current Resident



May you and those you love share the magical joy of childhood dreams....filled with cats that read you bedtime stories, dogs that can fly, and a world where all is wonderful and magical!!

Although we cannot return to those days, we can remember them and those we hold dear...with Hope, Love, and Kindness. May this time of year be everything you want it to be!!

Love and Licks from All Your Friends at Animals in Distress