



21265 STEVENS CREEK BLVD.,
SUITE 205-427 CUPERTINO, CA 95014

Winter 2003
Holiday Edition
Newsletter



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**Please Renew your
2004 membership
today!**

The Joys of Kitten Fostering

Cats have been an important part of Jeff's life since he was a child. But after his last cat passed away, he just didn't have the time to take on the full responsibility of adopting again. Then one day he was browsing Craig's list and came across an advertisement for fostering kittens for Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary (SHAS). He thought this would be the perfect fit—he could have cats in his life again without the long-term commitment of adoption.

Since then, Jeff has fostered two pairs of kittens: Mary and Maggie (see their after-adoption story p.4) and more recently, Frankie and Emmie (see photo above). Mary and Maggie were adopted shortly after Jeff began fostering them. Emmie and Frankie were with Jeff a longer time, and it was harder to let them go.

When they first arrived, Emmie and Frankie had just started eating solid food. Although they were still very young, Jeff quickly came to know their distinct personalities. Emmie was a sweet, reserved kitten, who bonded with Jeff but was shy around strangers. Frankie, on the other hand, was an energetic and bold kitten, unafraid of anyone. One thing that the two had in common was their love for playtime—they could play their favorite game fetch for hours.

So how do you let two such adorable kittens leave? For Jeff it's a combination of preparing himself for their departure and knowing he's helping them to find good homes. From the outset, Jeff reminds himself that he won't be adopting the kittens. He also gets to meet the potential adopters so he can be sure they are moving on to a loving family.

If you are thinking about fostering kittens there are some things to take into consideration. Just like when you adopt a kitten, fostering is a lot of work. Kittens, even after weaning, need a great deal of attention and care. Like Jeff, who only fosters weaned kittens, you might want to set limits about the age or type of cat you can foster.

But kittens are not all work. For Jeff, having kittens in his life again is quite simply a tremendous amount of fun and enjoyment. Jeff and other volunteers provide animals with the certainty of a good and loving home. Without these volunteers many kittens would grow up afraid of humans and unsuitable for adoption. If you are interested in fostering animals for SHAS, please call (408) 420-7233 or email us at: volunteer@safehavenforanimals.com.

A Message from the President

On behalf of Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our many donors and volunteers. Over the past year our organization has grown significantly due to your dedication of time and financial assistance. I am happy to report that in the last ten months we have successfully placed over 150 cats, kittens and dogs in to happy and loving homes. This is a tremendous jump from last year's total. (continued on p.2)

A Message from the President (continued from p.1)

As you have read in this newsletter, we have had several special needs kittens and cats come into our organization. These kittens and cats required additional medical care due to their respective injuries. We were overwhelmed at the support we received and thus were able to provide them with the special medical attention they required. Best Friends™ Animal Sanctuary in Utah also assisted us by taking one of our special needs kittens, Max. We truly appreciate their assistance and look forward to working with them in the future.

We had a very successful fundraising event this past summer! It was Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary's First Annual Auction for the Animals. It was a wonderful event with proceeds in excess of \$8,000.00. We hope that next years event will be just as successful. Stay tuned for details about where and when it will be held!

In closing, I would like to extend our wishes to all of you for a joyous holiday season and a happy and healthy new year. We look forward to another year of bringing people and homeless companion animals together.

Ginny Nichols
President, Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary

Please renew your membership

Or consider a donation to the special medical fund to cover extraordinary medical expenses of foster animals

Request for Foster Homes

Please remember that Safe Haven is always in need for good foster homes. If you are interested, please contact Safe Haven at (408) 420-7233

Bagwell's Story, By Yvonne Covello

Hello my name is Bagwell and I am very happy that my Mom came to SHAS to help me find a new home. My Mom adopted me at 4 months old from the Humane Society. I was VERY happy to have a new family to live out my life. Then one day my Mom had a new baby and had to move. She was very upset but had to make the decision to find a new home that could take much better care of me. I require a lot of exercise and attention and my Mom wasn't able to give me what I needed to be a happy dog.



My Mom was down to the wire to adopt me out to a new family. She decided to contact SHAS to help her find a new home for me. She couldn't bear to send me back to the Human society, the thought of it made her very upset. The wonderful people at SHAS found a very loving foster Mom that could take care of me until they found a permanent home. I got daily walks, hugs and my favorite part was that I was allowed to sleep in my Foster Mom's bed.

Then one lovely afternoon a new Mom with 5 children came over to visit with me. We played ball, ran and I got a lot of attention from the children. They made me feel like a puppy again. The new family decided to take me with them for the week-end to make sure everyone got along.

Well let me tell you, we got along so well that they forgot to bring me back to my Foster Mom. I missed my Foster Mom but I LOVED my new family. My new family contacted my Foster Mom and told her that they wanted to adopt me. OHHHHH Boy was I happy to hear that!

I go on vacation with my new family all the time (that is me on the beach in Santa Barbara). They have a really big backyard for me to play in and the oldest girl takes very special care of me. I just wanted to write this little story to say THANKS for supporting SAHS. With out all of your help I may have never ended up with such a great new family.



Older Cats Can Find Good Homes Too The Story of Cuddles

Lynda loves cats and has had many in her life but with all the traveling she does, she felt she no longer had time for cats. Then she saw the advertisement for fostering kittens with Safe Have Animal Sanctuary (SHAS). She thought if she couldn't have cats permanently, she could at least have them temporarily. So she called SHAS. But at the time there weren't any kittens available for fostering. Instead there was a 14-year-old cat named Cuddles.

Lynda wanted kittens—loved kittens, but she decided to take in this cat anyhow. And when Cuddles walked out of his carrier, all Lynda could say was, “wow.” What a coincidence that her first foster cat should be longhaired and black, the kind of cat she had always wanted.

Of course there is a lot more to Cuddles than just his good looks—and things got off to a rough start. With a name like Cuddles, Lynda naturally wanted to pick him up and cuddle him. But whenever she tried, he would scratch and bite her. It turns out that Cuddles had been the victim of two bb gunshots and one of them had lodged in his chest, between his front legs. Once Lynda knew what the problem was, she gently worked with Cuddles until she figured out a pain-free way to pick him up. Now when she holds him, he lays his head on her shoulder and drools with happiness.

Another puzzle for Lynda was his constant meowing. She thought it might be that he missed his former owners. But soon Lynda discovered the real reason—she caught him trying to break out of the garage. Two things happened at that moment. First, Lynda realized that he was meowing because he wanted to go outside and second, Lynda fell in love with this truly “unusual” cat.

Lynda decided to adopt cuddles, and everything fell into place. She still travels a lot, but she was able to find a good cat sitter. And she's comfortable now with Cuddles going outside. He has a daily routine of a short territory patrol and a long sleep in his favorite spot—the Elysium beds.

Lynda and Cuddles have worked out a few other important understandings. There's an understanding that Lynda needs to sleep on her right-hand side so that Cuddles can “cuddle” next to her. If she forgets, Cuddles is kind enough to remind her to turn over, with a few pats of his paw. And if Cuddles wants something, he simply stands by Lynda's side until she says, “show me” and then he proceeds to do just that, taking her to the door, or his food bowl or to whatever it is that he wants. And of course,

this involves waiting for a short time on the stool next to the bed. If Lynda doesn't wake up while he's sitting there, he gently pats her a few times, and then goes back to his stool again. He continues this patting, then waiting, until Lynda climbs out of bed.

If you talk to her about Cuddles, Lynda will tell you again and again how special he is. Cuddles certainly sounds like a unique cat but it is also clear that he is very lucky to have found such a perceptive and patient owner. While Cuddles is vocal and willing to express himself, it takes a special person to understand what he needs. When Cuddles first arrived, Lynda could have dismissed him as a mean and aggressive cat. Instead, through her sensitivity she was able to see that Cuddles was in pain and, with the right approach, he was a very affectionate cat. While some might have only seen an old, ragged-eared, street-smart cat, Lynda was able to see, and to nurture, a beautiful, intelligent and loving cat.



Safe Haven sends Many Thanks to our Invaluable Volunteers!

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Yvonne Covello
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Paula T
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Lynn Mirassou
Rose Feil
Juli Arnold
Ann Gelhaus
Denise Jacobus
Tara Canobbio
Shawn Bunger
Susan VonKonsky
Suki Nakamoto

Maggie & Hermione

When nine-year-old Amy and seven-year-old Amanda came home from school one day last April they thought it was going to be a bad afternoon. Their Mother, Jo, told them that their room was a mess and their laundry had to be picked up and washed immediately. It looked like it was going to be a long afternoon of chores. Little did they know that there was a something special waiting for them inside the laundry room.

Unhappily, Amy and Amanda followed their Mother's instructions and took their clothes into the laundry room. And what a surprise! Staring at them was a striped, furry face—a kitten! A tiny, adorable kitten—the kitten they had been asking for since last year! They were so excited about Maggie the kitten that they did not at first notice a second furry face peering out at them from the corner. But soon the girls were giving this shier, black kitten their attention too. The second kitten was later named Hermione, after the girl-wizard in Harry Potter.

It was soon obvious that there was a perfect match between the girls and the kittens. Maggie was more independent and playful, like Amy. Hermione was quieter and cuddly, like Amanda. The girls and the kittens made a great match—so great in fact that the girls love to tell Jo: “these are the perfect cats for us.”

Not only are Maggie and Hermione a great fit for the girls, but Jo and her husband, Jon, sometimes feel like these cats may have been destined for their household.

When Jo and Jon first met, Jo had two cats—two brothers who looked, behaved, and had the same personalities as Maggie and Hermione. The coincidence is even more extraordinary because Jo never actually met the kittens until the day they were first brought to her house. Jo had seen their pictures on the internet and talked to their fosterer, Jeff (see Jeff's fostering story p.1), but she had no idea just how similar Maggie and Hermione would be to her cats from twenty years ago.

Regardless of what brought the kittens to their home, Jo says they bring a lot of benefits to their family. There are tangible rewards, such as the responsibility that Amy and Amanda take on in feeding and grooming the cats. The girls also protect Maggie and Hermione, picking up unsafe toys and making sure that guests treat the cats well. But even more Jo appreciates the less concrete rewards. Amy and Amanda have developed relationships with the cats and have learned about different personalities. The cats bring joy into Amy and Amanda's lives; just hearing the cats purr makes them happy. Jo sums it up saying that the cats are “a wonderful way for the girls to learn about the world.”

Silent & Live Auction Update

SHAS' first silent & live auction was held in June of this year and it was a great success, raising over \$8,000! Some of our major donors for this auction were:

- Southwest Airlines
- The Copper Gallery
- Laurie Roberts and our friends at 98.5 KFox
- California Impressionist Laura Iverson
- New York Artist, Kimberly Dawn
- Fun Art by Sandra Spencer
- Custom Designed Jewelry, by artist Amber Zehnder of Jewelry Flaunt.
- Beautiful handmade Swarovski crystal necklaces with silk cord by M. E. Benson's
- Antiques & More located in downtown Saratoga
- Manresa in Los Gatos
- The Steven Kent Winery
- Lail Vineyards
- Visage Studio of Burlingame, California
- Nilou Day Spa of Saratoga, California
- Specialized Internet Solutions
- Pet Petter's
- Critter Care of Silicon Valley
- Aussie Pet Mobile
- Personal Chef from T'Allegra
- Gina's Avon
- Napa Valley Soap Company
- Sit Up & Beg Pet Baskets
- Artful Threads
- Coats from Paco
- Hobees California Restaurants

Be sure to join us for our next silent & live auction in June 2004. To donate to our next auction, please contact SHAS at info@safehavenforanimals.com



Max & Best Friends

When volunteers from Safe Haven rescued an adorable 12-week-old kitten in June 2003, we noticed the little guy didn't seem to know how to use the litter box. We took him to the vet and learned that Max was a manx kitten, a breed of cat with no tail. The vet told us that Max had a syndrome common to manx cats, where the nerve endings in his hindquarters were missing and therefore he could not sense when he had to go to the bathroom.

We tried adopting Max out as a special needs kitten, but no calls came in to adopt our little Max. We then decided to email Best Friends Animal Sanctuary in Utah, as they often take special needs kitties. We were overwhelmed with joy when we received a phone call from Best Friends stating that they had decided to open their hearts and doors to Max!

Our mission now was to deliver Max to Best Friends. Accompanying Max on this adventure would be four very excited volunteers, happy that Max would be going to a wonderful home where he would receive all of the medical care and attention he needed!

We had to fly into Las Vegas and check out a rental car for our four-hour drive to Best Friends! As we took off on our adventure, ordinary landscape slowly gave way to striking vistas, majestic mesas and beautiful colors only seen in postcards. The plan was to check Max in when we arrived at Best Friends and get him settled in for the night. We were all a bit somber, especially Diane, who had been Max's foster mom. However, as soon as we opened the door our faces lit up. Big and little furry "greeters" roamed the lobby and welcomed us with lots of tail wags and licks. The technician took us back to where Max would await his evaluation and let us visit with him before leaving for the day. She assured us that he would get nothing but the best treatment and he would be joining his new furry family soon. We would be back tomorrow to say our final good-bye.

The next morning, we went up to spend a day volunteering at Best Friends. We checked into the Welcome Center and hopped on a bus for a guided tour of the sanctuary. It's amazing that approximately 1,500 animals reside here, yet are provided with living quarters and an environment that far surpasses anything most of us could ever provide for our own pets. After the tour, we signed up to volunteer for the remainder of the day. Following a brief volunteer introduction, we opted to first visit with the senior dogs and then with the special needs cats.

Comical and heart touching best describes our time with the dogs. These creatures, whose age and physical limitations normally hold them back, scrambled out of their kennels at the mere thought of being taken for a short walk and treated to a doggy biscuit. Some of us spent time with the animals who could not be walked, offering back scratches, hugs and quiet one-on-one time.

What's astounding is that Best Friends offers visitors and volunteers an opportunity to take a dog for an "overnight stay"! Those interested can pick up a dog after feeding time, around 4:00 PM. They are then provided with a leash and other sundries for the dog's stay, and must return the dog the following morning in time for the morning meal. What a treat!

After saying good-bye to the dogs, we headed over to where the special-needs cats reside. Again, walking into the building we were greeted by feline residents waiting for a pat or chin rub. Considering the amount of on-going care needed to tend to these special cats, it was amazing how spotlessly clean and organized everything was. Each wing of the building houses multiple cats, all carefully matched together to ensure harmony and appropriate care. Socializing with these special guys was a highlight of our visit. Whether they were missing limbs, suffering from neurological damage or incontinence, or blind or deaf, they all enjoyed the attention given and time spent with them, rewarding us with head butts and purrs. It was hard to say good-bye.

Before we left Best Friends, we just had to say good-bye once more to Max. We found him lounging comfortably, looking very contented. We each said good-bye, feeling both sad and happy at the same time. Yes, we would miss him terribly, but what better place for Max than Best Friends!

You can learn more about Best Friends at their website at www.bestfriends.org.



Hoping to adopt a new member of the family?

Think of SHAS! We do everything possible to socialize our animals and prepare them for a happy future with you.

Here's what we provide when you adopt from SHAS:

For \$100 adoption fee:

- Spay or neuter
- Leukemia and FIV testing
- Microchipping by Avid®
- Deworming
- Flea treatment with advantage
- Two months of free pet health insurance from Sheltercare
- First set of shots

To see pets available for adoption you can:

- 1) Visit our website: www.safehavenanimalsanctuary.org/adopt/index.html
- 2) Or visit our Pet Adoption Fair:
 - Every Saturday, 12:30-4:30
 - Pet Club
 - 5625 Snell Avenue, San Jose
 - (408)-363-6068

A few notes on SHAS adoptions:

- Currently only Santa Clara County residents can adopt
- Not all available animals appear on our web page (due to shyness or other factors). For complete listings, you can reach us at info@safehavenforanimals.com or (408) 420-SAFE (7233)



Vet Q & A with Dr. Munir Kureshi D.V.M.

Question: With regard to Feline Leukemia (FELV), when is it "safe" to intermingle cats/kittens? What guidelines would you recommend?

Answer: You must consider more than whether the kitten is Feline Leukemia negative or positive. Besides receiving a negative test result, it is important to look for other health problems. If the kitten is Feline Leukemia negative and is showing signs of poor or deteriorating health, I would not recommend having the kitten around other cats or kittens. If the Leukemia test is negative and the kitten appears otherwise healthy, there is less possibility of spreading disease - including Feline Leukemia. Usually if the kitten is Leukemia positive at a very young age, it has been passed from their mother either transplacental or through feeding and cleaning. If you suspect Feline Leukemia and the test is negative, wait another 6-8 weeks and re-test. It is important to look at each situation individually, as each situation will vary. Please contact your veterinarian or Dr. Munir Kureshi D.V.M. if you have any questions regarding Feline Leukemia.

Munir Kureshi, DVM
(408) 252-6380
Cupertino Animal Hospital
10026 Peninsula Avenue,
Cupertino, CA 95014

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(continued on p.8)

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- ☞☞ Partner \$500
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Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary was founded on the belief that no animal should have to go hungry, be homeless or live in fear or pain, regardless of its appearance or health. The Sanctuary believes that all animals deserve to be treated with dignity and respect and be provided with care in an environment that will help increase their opportunities for a better and safer life. If you would like to receive this newsletter via email, refer to our Web site at

www.safehavenanimalsanctuary.org.