



# ANIMAL TALK

Winter 2006 • Vol. XXXI, No 4

P.O. Box 14956, Portland, OR 97293

## Being a Foster Home With ARCF



Foster homes provide temporary shelter and care for animals who are awaiting adoption. Foster homes come in all types: families, couples, people living alone. Most already have pets of their own. Some have large homes, some quite small homes. But all of them have decided to make room for an extra kitty, or mom and litter, to give these pets time to find the right new home.

Some have had rough experiences, and need time and care to learn to trust and enjoy human company again; and some need time to heal from injuries or illnesses. Foster homes give them the time, affection, and shelter they need.

How many animals you foster is up to you. We are always looking for single-cat foster homes, for our kitties that don't like to be with other cats. Also we're always looking for foster homes with cat-friendly dogs, for the ones that like dogs.

### Reasons to Be a Foster Home:

- You are taking a cat off the street and feeding it healthy food (as opposed to rotten McDonald's trash, which our foster kitty George was found eating).
- You are getting the animal needed medical care (like Bo, who was out on the street, with a broken hip; or the dozens of cats we see that have flea infestations, ear mites, tapeworms, etc.).
- You are helping the animal develop a strong bond to a human.
- You are providing a safe and "normal" place to live and grow that makes them healthier, friendlier, and happier.
- It is an alternative to permanent adoption. If you love animals but can't adopt one right now, being a foster home is an excellent alternative to ownership. You can have an animal without the long-term commitment. The only thing you need is lots of love.

#### The Pros

*"If you love cats, you will love meeting new ones all the time. It's been such fun learning about cat behavior and assessing their personalities. It's sort of like solving a mystery."*

*"I like seeing a kitty come in and the changes that can happen before it leaves for a permanent home. I've had a cat go from slightly nasty to very sweet, one from very scared to friendly, and from unhealthy to gorgeous."*

*"Just knowing that another one or two little ones can get off the street, get away from fleas, get good food, get out of the cold and into a warm, loving home makes it worth it."*

*"If you asked each animal that went into a good home, I'm sure it would say that this is the ultimate in importance."*

*"I keep doing it because I really want to have a cat around and I feel sort of lost without one, but after putting my cat of 18 years to sleep, I just don't feel ready to make another lifelong commitment."*

#### The Cons

*You will get attached. We all get attached to our foster animals. But we also know that because we are so picky, our foster animals go only into the best homes. Sure, we cry when our fosters leave us. But then we remember that there are 10 animals on the waiting list who deserve that empty spot in our house.*

*"You have to learn to let kitties become comfortable in your house and learn how to be comfortable with them. You have to change sometimes as much as they do."*

*"Sometimes it is heart-breaking when they come to us underweight, with parasites, injuries, and/or infections, and timid, but still so desperate to be loved."*

*"People think I'm the crazy cat lady who collects cats."*

We are always in need of foster homes. If you think you'd like to be one, but you're not sure, you can try it once and see how it goes. There's no obligation to become a permanent foster home.

If you're interested in becoming a foster home, call ARCF at 503-284-8768.

## The Kitty Corner



It has been a great year, and I'm looking forward to next year! However, my tenure is over as president, so I will go back to just doing the newsletter and fostering. Pam Brooks has stepped in as our new president. She has been with ARCF for 12 years and has been treasurer for the last three. Pam has also been our cat coordinator for the past year, and has done a terrific job of fielding phone calls, placing kitties and 10,000 other things.

We also have three new board members: Carma Crimins, Chrisi Badrick, and Leah Goodman. Chrisi is our new treasurer. So, welcome Pam, Chrisi, Leah, and Carma!

Thanks again to all of you, our supporters, for helping us do rescue work. We had a very successful 2006, and I just know 2007 will be spectacular!

*--Jackie Fischer, outgoing President*

When I began fostering for ARCF I never dreamed I would have involved myself to this point. (That's what happens when you leave the room during elections.) I am promised that I just have to chair meetings and do very little else in that position. That's a good thing, because we need what little time we have to get this work done.

I have learned a great deal since joining ARCF. The most fun is fostering a new cat and learning all the ins and outs of its personality. And it's very gratifying to talk with potential new guardians that are going to make a terrific home for a new kitty whether they adopt from us or not. It's also very gratifying to help a cat whose people have hit upon a bump in the road and can't afford to take care of an emergency that has occurred.

I am looking forward to another year of working with the terrific team of volunteers of ARCF to help many, many more little furry ones in 2007. We are able to do all of this because of our wonderful and generous supporters. We simply could not do this without you.

*--Pam Brooks, incoming President*

## What Does ARCF Really Do?

This year has taught us that many people don't know exactly what we do, nor how small an organization we are. For example, many people call us and think they have reached the "ARCF office" or the "ARCF shelter." Well, there is no official office and no shelter. There are currently just nine "core" people (all volunteers) who work together to run ARCF. All of the adoptable cats on our website are in volunteers' homes. When you call our phone number, it rings at someone's house. Almost all of our volunteers also work full-time jobs.

We get between 10 and 30 calls per day. These calls are usually people asking for help. About one-third are trying to find a home for a pet they can no longer keep (we generally can't help in these situations); one-third are from people who have a stray; and the rest vary (feral cats, lost pets, pets that need to be boarded while people go into a domestic violence shelter, people who need help catching or rescuing their pet, etc.).

We also get calls for help with wildlife (squirrels, raccoons, birds, etc.) which we try to refer to the appropriate group; from people asking for advice about behavior issues; and we receive many emergency calls from people who have found an injured animal that needs immediate care.

Many people call us for help with veterinary bills. Most of these we can't help, but we do now and then, depending on the circumstances. Many of these are from people with an animal they took in as a stray. They gave the animal good shelter and lots of love, but they weren't prepared for the big vet bill when the animal became injured or developed a medical problem. We have also helped people who have adopted pets from shelters and were not aware of the poor health condition their pet was in at the time of adoption.

Only 1 in 12 calls is someone wanting to adopt.

Because of the small size of our group, our priority is to rescue animals in immediate need of help. For all other cases, we offer what assistance or advice we can.

Two years ago, Multnomah County Animal Services estimated that there were 197,000 homeless cats in the county -- a number that has only increased.

This is why ARCF and other rescue groups and shelters have to say, "sorry, we can't help" to so many people.

And that's where you come in. If it weren't for your support, we could not continue this work. You have given us the means, the strength, and the courage to go on, to keep plugging away, even on days when we get 45 calls--all for help.

Thanks so much for all you do for ARCF and the animals.

P.S. And don't forget to encourage your family, friends, co-workers, and neighbors to spay and neuter!

## "SPOTLIGHT" CAT OF THE MONTH



### Amanda

This petite long-haired tabby is looking for a loving and attentive home. She would prefer to be an only-kitty since has made it clear she doesn't appreciate other cats around. In return, she provides unlimited love, cuddles, and kisses on the nose. Amanda's favorite activities include cuddling, sleeping in the sun, and watching Animal Planet on TV. She is very talkative and likes to tell you all about her day when you walk in the door. After a momentary cuddle when you come home, she's ready to play. She will play alone with her toys, but prefers to have people participate in the games. When desperate, she'll chase toes under blankets!

Amanda is self-assured and friendly, even with strangers, and adapts well to change. She is looking for someone who is happy to share their bed at night and the couch at TV time. Because Amanda is such a "people" kitty, we think she would like a home where someone is around a fair amount of the time. Amanda has been de-clawed, so she needs to stay indoors at all times. She is a very young 10 years old, spayed, and is up-to-date with all vaccinations.

If you are interested in this special girl, phone ARCF at 503-284-8768 or email us at [arcf@pdx-petadoption.com](mailto:arcf@pdx-petadoption.com)

## Animal Placement

In August, September and October, we placed 35 cats in permanent homes.

Our major expenses for those three months were:

Veterinary fees: \$18,846\*

Advertising to find new homes: \$157

Food, special meds: \$76\*\*

Newsletter "Animal Talk": \$882

\*These expenses also include veterinary care for the dogs of Portland's homeless and a few emergency care visits. We also had expenses for several severely injured pets and very sick ones. All are doing well.

\*\*Most volunteers pay for food and litter for the animals they care for themselves as their contribution to the cause.

## Call For Volunteers

- Deliver copies of our newsletter to places of business (pet stores, vets, groomers, day care, libraries, restaurants, etc.). You pick the spots. You can deliver 3 or 300, it is up to you.
- Stuff envelopes (for the newsletter). You can do this in your own home, on your own time. You can stuff 5 or 500, again, it is up to you.
- Transportation. Transport cats to/from vets, pick up and deliver food/litter, pick up and deliver newsletter, etc.
- Write blurbs describing cats for the ARCF website.
- Write articles for the ARCF newsletter.
- Make collars and tags or catnip toys for foster cats. Do it in your own home.
- Marketing/PR. Figure out ways to get our name out there and known.
- Outreach. Liaison with other animal rescue groups.
- Check addresses of potential adopters.
- Be a foster home or "emergency" foster home. (An emergency home means you will have the animal for two weeks maximum.)

To volunteer, please contact ARCF at [arcf@pdx-petadoption.org](mailto:arcf@pdx-petadoption.org) or 503-284-8768.

**Animal Talk** is a quarterly newsletter published by Animal Rescue & Care Fund, Inc.

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Animal Rescue & Care Fund, Inc., is a private, non-profit, tax-exempt corporation funded solely by private donations. A board of directors makes decisions on policy and activities. All funds are used exclusively for veterinary care, food, classified advertising to find suitable homes to place animals, and publishing the quarterly newsletter, "Animal Talk." Volunteers provide good temporary homes until the animals are placed in responsible, permanent homes.

## SUCCESS STORIES

# Shirley & Maggie

Maggie had a tough couple of years before she came to ARCF. After she was rescued from outdoors and went for her vet visit, we were able to trace some of her history through her microchip.

We learned that she is a 10+-year-old former shelter cat who was previously adopted by a woman whose apartment building did not allow pets. Maggie was sent to live outside, and because she was neglected, she moved on to another apartment building down the street. That building also did not allow pets, but a kind lady named Ann and some of the other tenants there, also animal lovers, did their best to discreetly care for Maggie.

They had her vaccinated and made sure she was spayed, and people took turns feeding her. This went on for a long time, until finally one of the tenants (NOT an animal lover) called the owner of the building and demanded that Maggie be removed from the premises immediately -- she was scheduled to be trapped and euthanized.

One of the caring neighbors hid Maggie in the laundry room until rescue could be arranged, and after a couple of days, she came to ARCF as a foster cat.

Although she is a beautiful cat who is very loving and easygoing, for some reason not one person inquired about adopting her for nearly three months. It



may have been due to her "senior" status, or perhaps it was her long hair-- but we believe it was because she was waiting for just the right person to come along. That person was Shirley Martin, and if ever a cat and a lady were meant to be together, it was the two of them.

Shirley's beloved cat Sugar passed away at an impressive 24 1/2 years of age, and her heart was broken. More than a year went by before Shirley began to consider adopting another companion. Then one day a friend, who had recently adopted from ARCF, showed her Maggie's photo on our website, and she knew Maggie was the cat she had been waiting for.

If she spoke English, Maggie would tell you that her fondest wish has always been to live indoors, warming a lady's lap, being brushed and fussed over. Now her wish has been granted, and she is one happy cat!

### Shirley & Maggie

*We often get calls from people looking for a "kitten" to be company for an older relative. Please remember that, not only is a kitten a lot of work, a healthy cat can live 20 years or more.*

*Consider an older, more settled cat with a known personality.*



## Slinky

Slinky was our Special Needs cat in the Fall 2006 newsletter. She was adopted by a very nice young man, Josh, who absolutely adores her. He grew up with an Abyssinian and was looking for one because he had just lost his beloved kitty Hiro. It was true love at first sight for Josh and Slinky. Of course, she only likes one person (Josh) -- everyone else is kitty litter. Slinky is very much the queen and rules the house!

## SUCCESS STORIES

# Simba & Nala

These gorgeous kittens were abandoned at a bus stop this past April, trapped in a box along with their two littermates (black beauties Tabitha and Marshmallow. The kittens were fortunately discovered by a caring lady and ARCF supporter who took them to safety at her house and called us for assistance.

They were adopted by Jake Teeny and his terrific family, in honor of Jake's 17th birthday. They named the girls Simba (meaning "lion") and Nala (meaning "luck" or "gift").

Here's what mom Rochelle Teeny has to say about them:

"They are WONDERFUL, mischievous cats! Their personalities are very different! They are so much fun!!! Simba, if you go to pet her, will just flop down, even roll on her back and just lie there and let you pet and stroke her till the cows come home. (Which would be a real long time as we don't have cows.)

Nala is more skittish to your first touch, but she will come to you of her own accord, and curl up next to you, and then arch her neck around like a goose so that you can scratch it more easily.

Simba is a HUGE troublemaker -- while Nala watches. I have seen them in action! In fact, we've gone to once-a-day feedings because Simba will tear into anything, especially unsealed lunch boxes with pepperoni or jerky in them.

She also is the hunter, and for some insane reason, drops EVERYTHING into their water bowl. This includes sports bracelets, beads, twist ties, and even socks! And even though they are forbidden to be on the kitchen counter, every night I go in there and see Simba lying right on my "sterile" hand towel.

They race around the house like maniacs, and we got them a "Kitty Condo" (a tall, three-level scratching post unit) and also a smaller one that hides under the dining room table. Mr. Teeny hopes when he dies he is reborn as one of these cats, as they have about as nice a life as one could have on this planet.

We love them so much and are so grateful that we were able to make them part of our family."



Rhonda, Simba & Nala

### And Jake Teeny says:

"The two cats have fit in well with our humble abode. Together they fit in lovely with the on goings of every day life.

"They love to do their mad dash across the house as they play chase or sisterly wrestle. Their little paws can be heard pattering across the floor as they leap and bound after one another in playful fun. After their tiring exercise, they love to curl up in our laps and purr into tranquil sleep.

"And each has their own personality making them very fun to distinguish between.

"Simba's the fiendish one who's always looking to get into trouble then act like she did no wrong.

"Nala's the subdued one who loves to hop onto you wherever you are and cuddle up affectionately.

"Each one is greatly loved, and a forever addition to the Teeny household."

## One More Success Story ...

### Steve the Dog

#### Karen wrote:

*"Just wanted to say thanks again for all your wonderful help with the little dog. I can't tell you how nice it is to know he's finally in good hands and I can't thank you enough for stepping up and helping us. I look forward to supporting your organization in the future."*

#### Melanie wrote:

*"He is doing great. We have changed his name to Pappy. We think he looks a lot like Popeye's dad Poop Deck Pappy. And besides he's just a typical old man, so we thought that fit. His eye is healing wonderfully. The redness and swelling have gone down quite a bit. He's such a low maintenance dog. He just wants a warm place to lie, to be taken outside once in awhile, and of course to be petted. He's a sweet little guy. Wish I had a bigger place -- I would keep him myself."*

This sweet little Lhasa Apso was found in pitiful condition, wandering a busy street where he narrowly missed being hit by a car. Two terrific women, Kori and Karen, saw him and got him out of the road just in time. With no ID, they couldn't determine where he came from, so they took him to the Oregon Humane Society, who turned him away. They were told that he needed to go to Multnomah County Animal Services, because whoever must be looking for him would be able to pick him up there.

Kori was assured by OHS that he'd be found or that MCAS would put him up for adoption -- they said only rarely were animals put down -- which is why she even considered taking him there. At MCAS they said that if for any reason he was deemed "unadoptable" she could pick him up -- no mention of adoption fees or vet bills.

When she called to check on him they told her that Steve was going to be put down the next day and that's when they told her she couldn't just pick him up, she had to adopt him. But he couldn't be adopted because he had to be neutered first. Problem was, he was determined to be around 12 years old, so a full blood panel was required first to see if he was healthy. Next, they said his badly infected eye had to be removed, and the rest of his teeth pulled -- all this was adding up to a huge vet bill, and MCAS wouldn't release him. He also had obvious signs of neglect: two-inch-long toenails, all thickened and curled under; long hair, full of mats; both ears were infected; and he had a skin rash.

As you can imagine, he was not feeling very well at all! So when the shelter behaviorist went to assess his temperament for adoptability he nipped at her, and was branded "unadoptable."

Kori was able to stall the euthanasia, and Karen posted an ad on Craig's List ([www.craigslist.org](http://www.craigslist.org)) asking for help. The little dog had been "in jail" for eight days with almost no hope of getting out alive, when one of our volunteers heard his heartbreaking story. Another volunteer made some calls and arranged an inter-agency transfer to ARCF; a third authorized



the release, while a fourth volunteer went right out to pick him up.

He went straight to North Portland Veterinary Hospital where he was able to get the care he needed to begin healing and start his new life. The little guy was very popular and had many visitors who came to check on him. On his first day of freedom he began wagging his tail, happy for the company. His surgeries went very well and when he was ready to be released, foster mom Melanie brought him to her home to recover and get the love he deserves.

Thanks to Karen, Kori, Melanie, Chrisi, Carma, and Lorraine for saving him!

Editor's note: Steve/Pappy is now looking for a permanent home. If you're interested, please call ARCF at 503-284-8768.



### Thank You

A year-end thank you to all our volunteers--Pam, Lorraine, Katie, Erin, Jackie, Carma, Leah, Chrisi, Lenore, Marion, Joyce, Marcia, Mrs. Carroll, Sharon D., Ann H., Louise K., Melanie.

A huge thank you to the vets who have volunteered their time, facilities, etc.: North Portland Vet, Rose City Vet, Laurelhurst Vet, Cat Hospital of Portland, and Newberg Vet.

And thanks to all of you who continue to support us!!

## ASK THE VET

### Cataracts in Pets

Cataracts are one of the most common eye problems affecting pets. They can affect all breeds and ages of dogs and cats, but the condition is found more commonly in certain dog breeds, such as Cockers, Poodles, Miniature Schnauzers and Terriers.



The normal, transparent lens in the eye focuses beams of light onto the retina so that your pet can see clearly. A cataract is a disruption of the normal arrangement of the lens fibers that interferes with sight by partially or completely blocking the clarity of the lens. A cataract may be quite small and not significantly interfere with your pet's vision, but if the cataract becomes dense enough, vision may be lost.

It is not unusual for your pet's eyes to become slightly blue-gray as they age. As a normal part of the aging process, the lens becomes thicker, making the eyes appear grayer. This condition, called nuclear sclerosis, usually occurs in dogs over six years of age and typically does not affect their vision. Therefore treatment for this condition is not recommended.

Cataracts can be hereditary or due to old age. Inherited conditions are the most common cause of cataracts and may be present at birth or develop when the animal is very young. They can also be caused by injury, or illness such as diabetes. If your pet's cataracts are due to an underlying condition, such as diabetes, treating the condition may diminish the cataracts.

There is no effective medical treatment for cataracts. Cataracts are not painful, but when your pet has trouble navigating due to vision loss, his sight can be restored to near normal through surgery. A veterinary ophthalmologist will surgically remove the lens, replacing it with a plastic or acrylic prosthetic lens to allow for more focused vision. Cataract surgery generally has a 90-95% success rate, but it is also a very delicate procedure that requires extensive postoperative care by the pet owner.

After surgery, your pet will have to wear a protective collar (Elizabethan Collar) until his eye heals and you will need to keep him quiet and calm. Your pet will also require eye drops to be administered several times a day for a few weeks.

You and your veterinarian can decide if cataracts are affecting your pet's vision enough to warrant surgery. For more information, consult with your veterinarian.

--AAHA

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### About That Stray You're Feeding

Yes, it is very, very nice of you to feed that stray cat in your neighborhood. But please help the bigger problem (cat overpopulation) by taking that next step and having the kitty spayed or neutered.

Why? Because female cats come into heat and can get **pregnant as early as January**. Kittens are born as early as March (cats have a 2-month gestation period). Which means one female cat can have up to 3 litters, or about 12 kittens, per year. And one unfixed male cat can impregnate HUNDREDS of females per year.

*Don't Wait to Spay!  
Do It Today!*

### Spay & Neuter Coupons

On request, we can provide coupons for spaying and neutering cats and dogs. These coupons make this procedure very affordable. Several good, full-service vets participate in this program. For coupons please call ARCF at 503-284-8768.

Remember: cats and dogs are fully sexually mature at the age of six months and can be safely spayed or neutered at that age.

### Let Us Hear From You!



We want to be more interactive with our readers. Do you have comments, questions, problems, stories, advice? Have you found a new pet-related product that you love? Do your kids have a pet story they'd like to tell us? Let us know!

Email: [arcf@pdx-petadoption.org](mailto:arcf@pdx-petadoption.org)  
or write us at:

P.O. Box 14956,  
Portland, OR 97293-0956.

## In Memoriam

### In Memory of Phoebe

by Marian Massey

Phoebe Jane Bird came to live with me in late January 1994, just a few days after I lost Sadie. The house was far too quiet without a cat, and even though I knew I couldn't replace Sadie, I welcomed the distraction of another cat. I met Phoebe (then known as Waif and previously named Velvet) and it was love at first sight.

This adorable five-pound flirt was clearly a social butterfly. She greeted every guest at the front door, attended all parties and never met a lap she didn't like.

Within a week, I discovered that she had allergies and for a while her doting attendants included a vet, a veterinary allergist, and a naturopath. She was allergic to corn, wheat, pork, beef, dairy products, and American dust mites. I coped by installing a HEPA filter on the furnace and spent hours squinting at the tiny print detailing the ingredients in the high-priced canned food she required.

This tiny tuxedo ruled the household for the next 12 years. A finicky eater, she taught me to offer a multi-course Kitty Buffet until she found something that appealed to her. A cat of refined tastes, she made it clear that smoked salmon, cantaloupe, and fresh asparagus really were cat food. On her first Thanksgiving with us,

I discovered she knew the word "turkey" and would come running whenever she heard it.

Phoebe's mantra was "your pillow is my pillow." If she was feeling generous, I got a corner for myself. If I sat, she was on my lap. If I lolled on the sofa, she inserted herself between my face and the book. When I played the piano, she sat on my lap, purring loudly.

Phoebe's many admirers showered her with gifts and there too, she expressed her preferences. When presented one Christmas with two catnip-stuffed fleece fish, identical except for the color, she ignored the red one entirely and adored the green one. She played with it, rolled on it, and slept on top of it for the rest of her life.

At her annual exam in February 2005, we discovered multiple (and therefore inoperable) tumors on Phoebe's liver and were told she had perhaps a couple of months to live. With the help of an extraordinary vet and some innovative holistic care, she was comfortable and happy until August 2006, when we said goodbye.

Like all those we love, Phoebe was unique. She will always have a place in my heart and I still wake in the middle of the night, thinking she is sharing my pillow. And now, once again, there is a new cat from ARCF, helping to fill the space in my home.



Mary Lou Pollock lost her sweet kitty, T.J.

Marian Massey lost her darling Phoebe after 12 years.

Yvonne Jones lost her Arnie after 15 years.

Gloria Mathies lost her sweet Katie.

Jackie Fischer and Eric Allen lost their beloved dog, Woody. He was 16.

Marcia Petty and Walt Gorman lost their dear Snowy, age 10.

## YES! I want to help

Animal Rescue & Care Fund depends entirely on your donations to help the animals. Our work includes rescue, medical aid, food and shelter, humane education, neutering/spaying, and more. All workers are volunteers.

Your contribution goes directly to help the animals. All contributions are tax-deductible.

I enclose \_\_\_\_\_ for humane work.

(\$35 sponsors a cat, but of course, we are grateful for any amount.)

Sponsors can receive a photo and a story about the cat.

I'm interested in receiving a story and a photo.

I'm interested in being a volunteer. Please contact me at \_\_\_\_\_.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Animal Rescue & Care Fund

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