

## Acupuncture in Pets

By Angie Casazza, DVM



For many animals that are suffering from arthritis, muscle spasms, itchy skin, decreased appetite, vomiting, and many other symptoms, acupuncture can be used alone or in conjunction with other therapies to more rapidly and effectively achieve positive results. Used successfully on animals and people for over 3000 years, acupuncture is now being offered by an increasing number of veterinarians.

One common use for acupuncture is to address pain, especially pain associated with osteoarthritis, a very common ailment affecting the quality of life in an aging pet population. In addition to pain management, acupuncture is used to help treat many musculoskeletal, neurological, dermatological, respiratory, gastrointestinal, and immunological disorders, as well as to help aid in recovery and rehabilitation after surgery or injury.

Because it works primarily via the central nervous system, acupuncture can have a positive effect on all major physiological systems. Results of acupuncture treatment can include reduced pain, faster healing through increased circulation and nerve stimulation, and strengthening of the immune system. While there are still some unknowns about its precise mechanisms, it is widely agreed that acupuncture facilitates the release of endorphins, one of the body's pain control mechanisms, and cortisol, a natural steroid.

Acupuncture is performed with the insertion of very thin, sterile stainless steel needles into specific, targeted points on the body. During the acupuncture treatment, most animals exhibit very little or no pain or discomfort, although a pet may occasionally experience a brief moment of sensitivity when the needle enters the skin. Once the needles are in place, most animals relax and many even fall asleep during treatment.

A typical treatment lasts about 15 to 30 minutes. While there are some conditions for which a single treatment is all that is required, multiple sessions are required to treat many chronic conditions. A typical patient will start with weekly treatments for four to six weeks, with a positive response often noticed within the first several sessions. After the initial treatment period, sessions are reduced to an as-needed basis; most patients with chronic conditions will be seen every one to six months for maintenance therapy.

Before pursuing treatment with acupuncture, an acupuncture consultation is typically performed. The consultation includes a complete physical examination, a full review of medical history, and any necessary diagnostic laboratory tests and x-rays. The consultation is used to evaluate the nature of the disease condition, and to discuss recommended procedures, treatment goals and expectations, as well as possible complications or side effects.

Although it is not a universal cure, in certain disease conditions acupuncture can be highly beneficial. For many diseases, a combination of Western medicine (drugs and/or surgery), dietary change, physical therapy, and acupuncture will achieve a much better outcome than any one of these treatments used alone.

### About the author:

*Dr. Casazza completed more than 150 hours of acupuncture training with the International Veterinary Acupuncture Society and is an associate veterinarian at North Portland Veterinary Hospital, where she enjoys integrating acupuncture into her day-to-day*



## The Kitty Corner

Many of the calls we get concern behavioral issues. We'll hear "I've had cats all my life, but this behavior has me stumped." ARCF volunteers foster between one and a dozen cats most of the time. This is truly cat behavior immersion training.

Part of our job is to assess the personalities of our charges, so we can make the right match for their new home. We know that a cat's basic personality doesn't change; an outgoing or shy cat is generally going to stay that way. However, once in a new home, little habits may disappear or new ones develop, to fit the new environment.

A cat who likes change is about as common as a calico male. Bad behavior can be triggered by moving a litter box or introducing a new type of litter. Perhaps a favorite piece of furniture has been relocated or removed. The addition (or departure) of people or other animals can also upset the apple cart if not handled carefully.

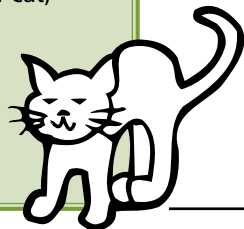
Despite their reputation for independence, the majority of cats need a certain amount of attention and most enjoy a lot of attention. Bad behavior can start when there's not enough of the right attention. (Being held up by the tail or choked is not it.)

When behavioral problems arise, take your shoes off and step into your kitty's paws. Try to see and feel from her level and apply what you learn to what you know about your cat. Take into consideration her physical makeup, instincts, and personality.

You might prefer that your cat stay off the kitchen counter but she is a curious athlete, governed by her appetite. She can't stop the instinct to feed herself. You can begin training to stay off the countertop, right after the temptation is removed.

A book I recommend is *Psycho Kitty* by Pam Johnson-Bennett. Even if you don't find the behavior that matches your cat, this book will put you in the right frame of mind to think like one.

--- Pam Brooks  
Cat Coordinator



## Nikki, the Miracle Kitten

When Nikki came to us in December, she was a wee thing, less than two months old. She had been part of a feral colony being cared for by a senior citizen. All the cats were trapped, neutered, and returned to their home, except for Nikki, who was the only kitten in the colony. We knew that she needed only some extra care and socializing to become a happy, indoor pet for some lucky family.

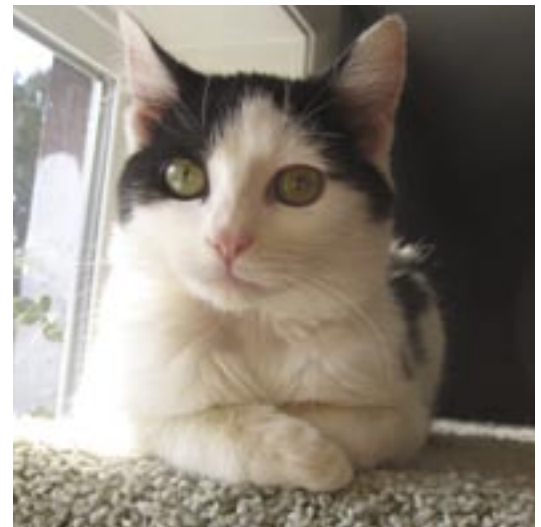
We found the perfect foster home for Nikki, but within a week she became very sick. Her foster mom knew it was important to take her to the emergency vet immediately. There Nikki was diagnosed with panleukopenia (commonly called distemper), which is very debilitating and almost always fatal in kittens. (That's one reason those kitten vaccines are so important.)

Nikki's foster mom agreed with the vet that she had a good chance of surviving with proper supportive care. It was going to require a long hospital stay and good follow-up care. ARCF and the foster mom agreed to split the costs, which ended up being a substantial percentage of our veterinary bill for the last quarter.

Nikki responded well to her care at the hospital and, after about a week, she was released to her foster home. She continued to gain weight and strength, and as you can see, she's now completely recovered, and has blossomed into a lovely teenager.

In the meantime, we had rescued another single kitten, Polly, who was lonely for a playmate in her foster home. Nikki moved to that home to be with Polly, and the two of them have formed a strong bond.

They are both available for adoption now, as a pair. Contact our cat coordinator at 503-284-8768 for more information.



Nikki



Polly

### More than Just the Pointy Bits

Have you ever wondered what is going on in your pet's mouth? How do you know if your pet needs its teeth cleaned? How do you go about it? What should you use? Why should you even be concerned?

Plaque and tartar build-up often lead to periodontal disease. Periodontal disease is the most common disease among dogs, affecting more than eight out of ten dogs over the age of three years. Bacteria can get into the bloodstream, possibly causing damage to your pet's internal organs. The five top warning signs of dental problems are:

- 1) bad breath
- 2) excessive drooling
- 3) red, swollen gums
- 4) tartar build-up at the gum line
- 5) broken or discolored teeth

Yearly exams will allow you and your veterinarian to determine when your pet is in need of dentistry. Cleanings under general anesthesia enable the vet or technician to remove plaque and tartar under the gum line, thus reducing harmful bacteria in the mouth.

Along with annual exams, you can help safeguard your pet's oral health with good home care. If you are able to start getting your pet used to the routine of brushing at 8-12 weeks of age, this will make it easier to continue when their adult teeth come in. Brushing once a day is ideal, but once or twice a week is helpful. If you need pointers on dental care at home, contact your veterinarian.



### Canine Corner Dogs + Kids = Fun!



Dogs and children go together like milk and cookies. There are many great benefits to a child from being around pets, and most dogs love the play and attention that they get from kids. There are precautions to be taken, however, and it's wise to understand both the risks and benefits of introducing kids to dogs.

**Dog owners:** Taking your dogs for walks and to parks is one of the great joys of dog ownership, and watching your dog enthusiastically greet a new friend can be quite rewarding. Take care to watch your dog for behavioral signs that he/she is enjoying an interaction. Is her tail up and wagging, or tucked between her legs? Ears alert or drooped? Excited and sniffing, or trying to hide? Remember, even wonderful dogs can have bad days. If your pup isn't enjoying a meet, play it safe and move away.

**Parents or guardians:** Dogs are a wonderful part of our lives, and it's great for our children to learn that they are our friends. Before your child meets a new dog, be sure to teach him or her some simple rules to ensure that both dog and child have a good time. When meeting a new dog, always ask the dog's owner for permission before approaching the dog. You don't want to startle him, so use slow movements and approach the dog gently. If the dog seems eager and receptive, go ahead and reach your hand out under his chin. (Try to avoid reaching over his head, as some dogs feel threatened by this.) If dog and child both seem relaxed and happy, let them play!

**Please remember:** The most important safety rule is to be aware and attentive. Pay attention to both the child's and the dog's behavior. Dogs and kids will let you know if they're not having a good time, and you can intervene early to avoid any stress.

**On a final note:** Please let your children know that they should not approach any dog unless supervised by an adult. Safety first is always the best rule. Encourage your children to let you know if they see a dog that they think is lonely, in trouble, or needs help.

---*Ronnie Balog-Ressler*  
Dog Coordinator

In our last issue we thanked the volunteers who make our work possible. We inadvertently left out **Leslie Jones**, who has provided a wonderful foster home for many of our rescued cats. Thank you, Leslie.

## CAT SUCCESS STORIES



### Mau Mau

(formerly Patrick)

Mau Mau loves to sit at the sliding glass door and watch the birds and squirrels. He has a friend who comes by and they pass some time growling at each other. He is a spoiled and happy cat, and I thank you so much for him.

*Marie Bent*



### Flossie Peaches and Edna Pearl

(formerly Peaches and Autumn)

In the year since Flossie Peaches and Edna Pearl came to live with us, Flossie has stolen the hearts of everyone from her vet to the toddler across the street. Edna takes good care of her sister and forgets her shyness when she's jumping and flipping and running all over after the bird. We can't imagine our family without these two sweet little girls. Thank you for taking care of them until they found their permanent home with us.

*Jennifer and Marc*

### Vehicle Donations

Remember that Animal Rescue & Care Fund, Inc., can now accept your unwanted vehicle as a tax-deductible donation.

For details, visit our website at: [www.pdx-petadoption.org/donate/donate.html](http://www.pdx-petadoption.org/donate/donate.html). Thank you for considering donating a vehicle to ARCF.



### Amelia and Sadie

(formerly Beezus and Ramona)

After our elderly cats Bitterman and Frankie passed on in 2008, we missed the companionship and love they provided. We decided to share our home with two new family members. After the Christmas holidays, we brought home sister kittens Amelia and Sadie. They are totally bonded to each other, and we are so happy to have them in our family.

*Don and Bobbie Presten*

*Left: Sadie, Amelia, and Don Presten*

## MORE CAT SUCCESS STORIES



*Above: Raja allows Chuck to be his loyal subject*

### Raja KB Brabenac

In December, we lost our beloved kitty to Feline Infectious Peritonitis. Once we caught our breath, we decided we were ready to love again. We found your website and completed the online pet adoption questionnaire.

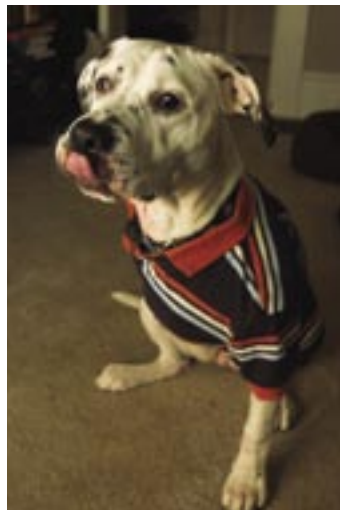
Several days later, ARCF cat coordinator Pam contacted us. After chatting, she suggested we meet 10-year-old Raja. Pam was Raja's foster mom and she named him. Raja means "King." The name fits because Raja looks and acts regal.

At our first meeting, we fell in love and we are now his loyal subjects. Older pets are often overlooked during the adoption process. However, older pets are mature and smart because they have already "been around the block" (literally) and they are grateful to find a forever home. Raja is playful, loving, intuitive, and talkative. His foster mom, Pam, never heard his purr. We can tell you that Raja's purr is back . . . and so is ours.

*Carla Kickbusch and Chuck Brabenac*

### Mojo Update

Regular readers of our newsletter will remember Mojo, the puppy who came to us with a severely injured front leg. She was adopted by Michael and Kristin Sulis, and with surgery and therapy has adapted well to life as a three-legged dog. Recently, the stump had become inflamed from her use of it as a prop. Another surgery was performed to remove the stump and she's again doing well.



### Miles and Ella

(formerly Kismet and Caramels)

Thank you again for helping us adopt Miles and Ella. They are wonderful, healthy, playful, and spoiled rotten. They have become an important part of our life and we love them. Thank you for all you do to care for and place these wonderful little creatures.

*Myra and Malcolm Mackey*

### Spay/Neuter Saves Lives

More than 5 million pets are put to death every year in shelters across the U.S., and the main reason is overpopulation. Only one in ten of 3 million puppies or kittens born in the U.S. each year finds a permanent home. A shelter animal is killed every 1.5 seconds and over \$2 billion is spent annually to shelter and destroy adoptable pets.

Spaying and neutering also:

- keeps future pets out of a shelter.
- prevents females from going into heat.
- reduces the risk of health problems like mammary tumors, uterine infections, and prostate cancer.
- reduces tendencies to roam, mark territory, and show aggression.

Low-cost spay/neuter services

- For pet cats and dogs:  
Oregon Spay/Neuter Fund,  
503-286-2411  
[www.oregonspayneuter.org](http://www.oregonspayneuter.org)
- For feral and unapproachable cats:  
Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon,  
503-797-2606  
[www.feralcats.com](http://www.feralcats.com)

# Pebbles Returned and Lessons Learned

By Shari Roberts

Pebbles is home again after being gone six long weeks. She had enjoyed going outside, but never wandered. One day after a horrible downpour Pebbles was nowhere to be seen. I checked all her secret spots, but no Pebbles.

Immediately I made signs, put them in plastic sleeves, and posted them nearby. I walked the neighborhood calling her, with no response.

I called the microchip company to verify my contact information. I posted lost cat reports online at Multnomah County Animal Services, DoveLewis Emergency Hospital, and popular internet resources Craigslist and Petfinder. Having a good, recent photo was helpful. I made more flyers and posted them on nearby utility poles, veterinary hospitals, bus shelters, and gathering places.

Every day for weeks I combed the streets calling her name. I went to every house within six houses of my own, asking permission to search yards, sheds, and garages. Everyone was concerned and promised to keep an eye out for her.

I had a few false alarms and even heard from scammers saying they had my cat and only needed for me to send them \$1,000 to assure her safe return.

On a Monday, nearly six weeks after Pebbles had disappeared, I got a phone message from a neighbor about ten houses away, saying "I think I have your cat."

Pebbles had been trapped in their shed, probably for at least two weeks. They assumed the cat fur and scattered litter they had seen was from their own cat. She may have done some hunting, but otherwise was without food or water.



Weak but alive, Pebbles was rushed to our vet by the neighbor, where the microchip scan confirmed her identity. It was such relief to know that no matter who had found her, any vet or shelter would have still identified her and located us.

Pebbles was transferred to a 24-hour emergency hospital, where she was examined and given a 50% chance of survival, due to severe dehydration. But her liver function was still good, and I knew she had the will to live.

By the next morning we knew Pebbles would survive. She had lost almost half her body weight, but after 24 hours she had regained one pound just from rehydration. After two days Pebbles came home. She was weak, but made daily progress regaining her strength and normal weight.

We'll never know whether Pebbles was frightened, chased, or picked up by someone who carried her away. But we know for sure that she will remain an indoor kitty from here on out, enjoying the warmth and safety of her home and her happy owners!

### Resources:

- Multnomah County Animal Services lost and found. File a lost pet report, search found pet reports. [www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbcs/pets/lostFound.shtml](http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbcs/pets/lostFound.shtml)
- DoveLewis Emergency Animal Hospital lost and found. File a lost pet report, search found pet reports, including photos. [dovelewis.org/lostandfound/](http://dovelewis.org/lostandfound/)
- Oregon Humane Society lost and found pets. Search the list, including photos. [www.oregonhumane.org/lost\\_pets/overview.asp](http://www.oregonhumane.org/lost_pets/overview.asp)
- Portland Craigslist lost and found, local internet classified ads. Post a lost pet, search for found pets. [portland.craigslist.org/laf/](http://portland.craigslist.org/laf/)
- Cats in the Bag website. Excellent search and recovery tips for lost pets. [www.sonic.net/~pauline/search.html](http://www.sonic.net/~pauline/search.html)
- Oregonian lost and found section. To run lost and found ads at no cost, call 503-221-8000, or visit [www.oregonlive.com/classifieds/free/](http://www.oregonlive.com/classifieds/free/)

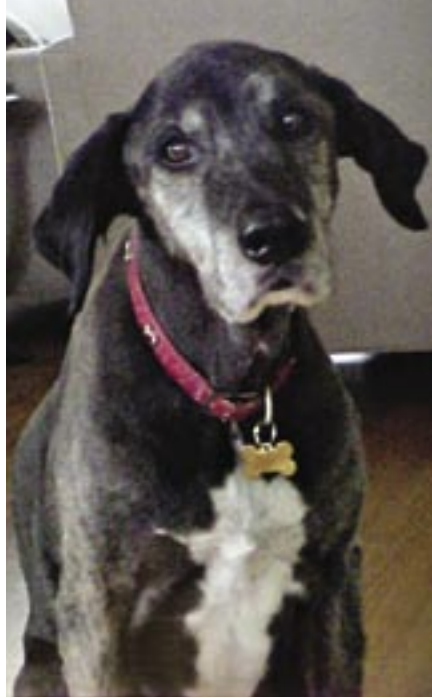
## IN MEMORIAM

### A Last Gesture of Love for Luna

By Erin Bergstrom

On a cold February night last year, I held my dog Luna as he passed peacefully away. After a brief battle with an aggressive form of cancer, Luna gave me permission to end his suffering. I had a list of vets who specialized in at-home euthanasia. I chose one to help us when the time arrived.

Making that call was one of the hardest things I have ever done. Luna was a rescued dog adopted 11 years earlier. He enjoyed a full life and I wanted his death to be equally loving and dignified.



It was important for my pets to be present, if they chose to. Luna was the pack leader. His loss left a big hole in our family. My other dog Poppy and my cat Jacque took it particularly hard. We now know that animals grieve when someone they are close to dies.

Here are a few things I have learned about the grieving process for humans and animals:

- Honor the pain of losing a beloved animal companion. We share our lives and our hearts with them. Sadness, anger, guilt, and depression are common. The feelings can be overwhelming, but don't deny them. Find a way to express them. Confide in a trusted friend or join a pet loss support group. It may be easier to share with others who understand first hand how you are feeling
- Be patient. The period of grief we experience takes as long as necessary. Give yourself time and permission to grieve.
- Take extra good care of yourself. The emotional toll is draining physically and mentally. Find some quiet time to recharge. Try to eat and sleep. Find a creative outlet for your feelings. Journaling, putting together a photo album, or planting a rose bush in honor of your companion animal can help to formalize your grief.
- Focus on the other animals in your family. Extra attention, exercise, and grooming can help them deal with their loss. They are very sensitive to changes and some cope better than others.

Luna has been gone a year now. It is still sometimes unimaginable that he is gone. The process has been painful but also rich. Grief can devastate or it can deepen us. It's a choice. When I get sad now I feel the emotions for a while and then I slip on my tennis shoes and grab Poppy for a walk. She is still here and so am I. Life goes on.

Jim Sutherland lost his senior cat Grady to kidney disease. His only remaining cat Frankie was very lonesome, so Jim invited a handsome orange tabby named Macaroni to join their household.



Jess Holt misses a little blue-eyed stray cat he called Fluffy Butt, who appeared suddenly one day with no explanation and just never left. She was lucky to spend her last years in his care.



Nancy Lisac lost her gentleman cat Harley, a beloved and true companion for almost 17 years. He is also survived by feline companions Rosie and Tiger Lily.



Sue Willis misses Hermione, matriarch of her feline tribe, who suffered from complications of asthma and other ailments.



Gigi Wood lost her 15-year-old cat Frosting to cancer.



Annette Myfedov lost her rescued cat Clarence in December. He is survived by his feline companions Percie and Sophie.



Marjorie Jangord lost her beloved Devon to cancer, also in December. She was deeply loved and sadly missed.



Lenore Bijan lost Lily, a disabled cat who spent eight years under her loving care.

### Resources:

For at-home euthanasia services:

- Dr. Joi Sutton, 503-490-3025
- Dr. Laura Chang, 503-757-6124
- Dr. Louise Mesher, 503-281-1631

- DoveLewis Pet Loss support program:  
[http://dovelewis.org/programs/Pet\\_Loss.aspx](http://dovelewis.org/programs/Pet_Loss.aspx)

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

Our Mission: "To rescue, shelter, and care for homeless animals and place them in permanent, responsible homes; to promote and support spay/neuter for all companion animals."

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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.

## Animal Placements

For Nov-Dec-Jan: we placed 18 cats in new loving, responsible homes. Our major expenses were:

Veterinary Fees\*: \$24,840.51  
Advertising: \$0  
Food, Special Meds\*\*: \$190.00  
Newsletter: \$986.75

\*These expenses include veterinary care for the dogs of Portland's homeless. We also had expenses for injured and sick pets and emergency vet visits.

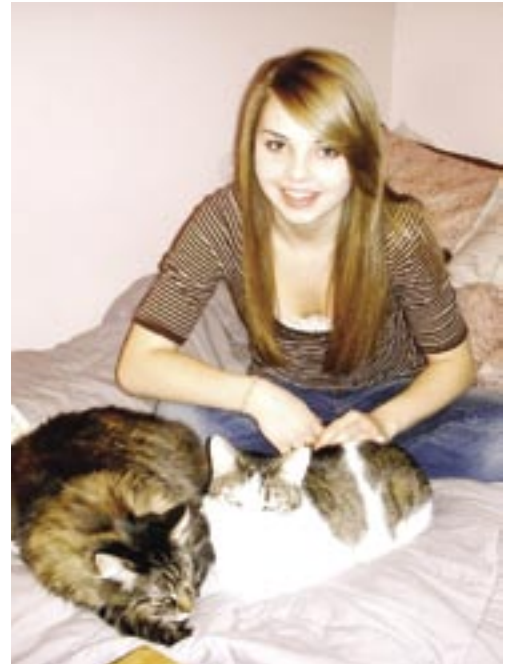
\*\*Most volunteers pay for food and litter for the animals they care for as their contribution to the cause.

## My View on Cats

By Erika Tompkins (age 14)

Ever heard of the expression "A dog is a man's best friend?" Well, from my perspective a cat is a woman's best friend.

Cats are a huge responsibility, but in return they will give you love and always be there to make you laugh and smile. Cats need as much attention as children do. If you adopt a kitten, you need to know that it doesn't stay small and adorable forever. Just like people, it will grow up and change the way it looks.



Above: Annye, Penny, and Erika

When you adopt a cat, it is your responsibility to take care of your cat its whole life. You have to make annual trips to the veterinarian to keep your cat healthy. Cats need love and care, and if you don't have much spare time, then a cat is not the right pet for you.

My cats, Penny and Annye, are sweet and loving when they want to be, and love to play. Penny is the rambunctious, hyper one, and Annye is the lazy, food-loving one. We call Penny "Penny-dog" because she plays fetch. We call Annye "Fluffy Butt" because she has fluffy fur. I know what they like, but I also know what is good for them so I don't feed them people food, except for the occasional turkey bits. I play with them, make sure they have fresh water, and my favorite – clean their litter box!

They sleep on my bed. Annye is like "The Princess and the Pea;" you must have at least two blankets folded up and a bed made before she will even think about sleeping there. Penny couldn't care less how many blankets she has, just as long as she's sleeping with me, she is happy.

## YES! I want to help

Animal Rescue & Care Fund, Inc., depends entirely on your donations. 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.

**You can now donate online using Paypal. Save time and postage! Visit our website for more details.**

I enclose \_\_\_\_\_ for humane work. (\$35 sponsors an animal, but we appreciate any amount)  
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