

Carson Cats

Volume 1. Issue 1

December 2012

Happy Holidays from Carson Cats!!

Inside this issue:

Stolen U-Haul	
FIV+ Cats Need Homes Too	3
Carson Cats in the Media	3
The Mighty Quinn	4
Siddhraj - Broken but Perfect	4
Benny the Bunny	5
Feral Cats in the Shelter	5

25 Animals Found in a 2

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Letter From Foster

Our Team

Awards

6

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

Adoptions Hours

* Fridays: 3pm to 7pm

* Sat/Sun: 12pm to 4pm

Carson Cats is an animal rescue dedicated to saving lives from the Los Angeles County Shelter system. This past year, Carson Cats saved **over 1200 animals!!** We rescue all kinds of cats - young, old, skinny and scared. We also aren't shy to help dogs, bunnies and other furry animals in need. We are a small team of volunteers that work around the clock to ensure that the most at risk lives are saved. We rely solely on the support of compassionate donors whose contributions allow us to rescue animals



from the shelter system and pay for their much needed veterinary care. A unique aspect of Carson Cats is that we also rescue many of the neighborhood feral cats brought into the shelters. These cats are the most at risk because they are not available to the public for adoption and therefore have no chance. We fix them, nurse them back to health and find them safe environments where they can live out their lives. We believe that every life deserves a chance.

As the year ends, we would like to share some of our most successful rescue experiences that have kept us inspired. We also wanted to thank you for your help in raising awareness to the millions of homeless pets that need our care.

Peace, Love & Paws,

Cyndí Zacko Founder of Carson Cats

Carson Cats will be at Petsmart!

We are excited to announce that in January, Carson Cats will be moving into the Luv-A-Pet Adoption Center at Torrance's PetSmart!

We would love to have you help us care and socialize the cats there! Please contact us at if you can help at cyndizacko@carsoncats.com!



Torrance PetSmart: 3855 Sepulveda Blvd Torrance, CA 90505

19 Cats and 6 Dogs Rescued from Stolen U-Haul

In May, a small stolen U-Haul truck was confiscated by the police and 4 dogs were found in the front of the truck. When Animal Control came, they opened up the back of the truck and the ammonia stench inside hit them like a ton of bricks. They found 22 other animals baking in their enclosures including 2 very large Pit bulls were chained up to the back and 1 dead cat in a dirty urine filled carrier. 19 other cats were lying in their own filth piled inside rotted traps, filthy carriers, and rod iron bird cages. The cats could not even sit up and it appeared they had been in cages for months. 25 animals were removed from the truck and taken to the Carson Shelter. Carson Cats rescue was notified and immediately started to network for fosters and funds for vetting. One of the cats that was turned in was a sweet black cat with only 3 legs, the fourth was just a nub. The veterinarian speculated it was gnawed off or a result of trauma. We named him Finn.



3-Legged Finn makes biscuits in the air

When we pulled the cats, they were all severely malnourished, and dehydrated with upper respiratory. They were also filthy and had to be given multiple baths to turn their yellow hair white again! Six months later, Carson Cats is happy to report that all 25 dogs and cats have been paced into either foster or permanent loving homes. Many of the cats and dogs were scared and timid when they were first rescued, but have flourished in their homes.



Shelby in her new home, so happy to be out of a cage!



Sweet Will "before" and "after" in his new home!

We still have 3 cats from the U-haul looking for their forever homes—Finn (above), Sue and Burt (below). If you can open up your home to one of these sweeties, please contact us at cyndi.zacko@carsoncats.com.



2 Year Old Burt—Sweet and Loving



3 Year Old Sue-Playful and Loves to Rub on You

FIV+ Cats Need Homes Too!

Contributing Author Lisa Chassy, DVM

FIV, or feline immunodeficiency virus, is a commonly misunderstood disease of cats. It is in the same family of viruses that cause Feline Leukemia, and HIV, but for the most part, they do not have many similarities. FIV+ cats have no higher level of disease or illness than cats without FIV and often live 10 to 15 years after diagnosis.

It is common for potential adopters to disregard FIV+ cats because they fear it will live a shorter life—but in fact, these cats can live a totally normal life. Sometimes adopters fear FIV+ cats will spread this disease within the household cats. Interestingly enough, if cats do not fight, the disease is not transmitted within the household very often at all. Cat rescue groups are often faced with a dilemma as to what to do with cats that test positive. Since the cats stand a reasonable chance of being healthy for many years, it is difficult to decide to put these cats to sleep. But because the disease is not well understood, it is difficult to find homes willing to take these kitties in. Carson Cats never turns away a cat they have rescued that has tested positive for FIV. We do, unfortunately, have to board our FIV+ cats or pay for foster care since, like adopters, even foster homes are hard to find. These cats to no fault of their own have to spend months without homes.

If you have a cat with FIV, consider adding a cat that also has this infection. Or if you do not have a cat yet, but want to adopt one, consider adding an FIV positive cat to your life. Saving a life by adopting a cat is one of the most rewarding things you can do. Adopting an FIV positive kitty helps not only you but also the caretaking organization involved because it is so difficult for these kitties to find homes. These cats deserve a chance at a normal life, with a family that loves them. The 3 cats below are just some of the adorable FIV+ cats we have in boarding. Please contact us if you can sponsor, foster or adopt! View their videos on the YouTube channel Cat Chat with Arloa, under "FIV Cats up for Adoptions."



Sammy, 3 YR Maine Coon



Greyson, 3 YR Grey/White Tuxedo



James, 2 YR White/Grey Tabby

Carson Cats in the Media!

Being in the City of Angels has it's advantages and this year, many of our rescue cats have had their brush with Fame!

- * Our Kittens were filmed for an episode of Glee this past March!
- * Our cats were on NBC4's morning show Good Day LA!!!!!
- * Our sweet kitten Maggie was in 4 commercials!
- * Carrie Ann Inaba of Dancing with the Stars sponsors many Carson Cat rescues!



Cyndi Zacko, Lacey Ferris, Jimmy and Katie on Good Day LA

The Mighty Quinn!!

In August, one our fosters found a very scared maltipoo mix in a dumpster near her groomers. It looked like someone had broken his two back legs and left him there to die. He could not walk or go to the bathroom on his own. We took him to our veternarian and they were not sure if he would ever regain his bladder function or be able to use his back legs again. We were not ready to give up on him though because he was so sweet. We named him the Mighty Quinn. The veterinarian observed Quinn over the next week and during that time, they noticed he started to show pain in his back toes with reflexes!

We had a surgeon look at Quinn's x-rays again and they thought surgery could help realign some misplaced discs in Quinn's back.

This would relieve any pressure off Quinn's spinal cord enabling him to walk again!! We were ready to try anything, we just needed the funds for



Quinn, so Happy he can Walk Again!

his surgery! We networked for donations and were fortunate to have some very special angels came through for the Mighty Quinn!! He got his surgery and within days of recovery, he was able to walk again! Not only can Quinn walk now, but our veterinarian fell in love with him and adopted him into their family!

Siddhraj - Broken but Perfect

Meet Siddhraj! The luckiest kitty we rescued all year!!! Siddhraj was pulled out of Carson Shelter in August after volunteers called Carson Cats. They described him as a 3 month old feral kitten with a possible broken leg. Radiographs revealed that this kitten had more than just a broken leg. He was actually paralyzed from the waist down so he could not move his two back legs and had no bladder control. Unlike Quinn above, no surgery would ever fix this kitty. On top of his condition, Siddhraj had also contracted Panleukopenia at the shelter which is a viral infection that decreases a cat's white blood cells and compromises it's immune system. It is often fatal in kittens but this kitten had a will to live like no other we have seen....and boy did his fight pay off!

Siddhraj captured the hearts of everyone he met and landed a perfect home! A vet tech in San Francisco saw Siddhraj's online posting. She had been used to taking care of special needs animals and had just lost her special needs kitty to Spina Bifida. She said Siddhraj was exactly the criteria she was looking for: 1) Black 2) Kitten and 3) Broken, but perfect! She drove 6 hours to meet Siddhraj and it was a PUUURFECT match!!! They both were madly in love! She was the one who actually named him Siddhraj as his previous name at the shelter was Jet. Siddhraj means "Lord of Perfection."

Today Siiddjraj goes to work with his new mommy ever day and does his daily rounds with the patients. He even has his own facebook page so check him out! www.facebook.com/siddhraj.dunkin



Siddhraj, Paralyzed from Waist Down



Siddhraj at "Work" observing Patients during Surgery Recovery

Benny the Bunny!

Benny was the first Bunny Carson Cats ever rescued. He was found hopping along the side of a heavily trafficked road near the Ballona Wetlands, a marsh area known for people dumping their pets. Most abandoned pets there do not survive because they get run over by cars, eaten by coyotes, or starve. Carson Cats had rescued many cats before but never a rabbit so they quickly learned how to take care of Benny with the help of two local bunny rescues. Benny was neutered and soon adopted into a wonderful home after he went on a few play dates with his now girlfriend Bianca (see below). Did you know rabbits bond for life?



Benny and Bianca

After Benny, Carson Cats started to notice how little help rabbits get in the shelters. There are only a small number of rabbit rescues and not enough awareness. To learn more about rabbits, please check out these links:

www.petsave.org and www.sandiegorabbits.org



Benny his first night

Our Neighborhood "Feral" Cats in the Shelter

Carson Cats is one of the few rescues in Los Angeles that pulls cats labeled "feral" or fractious from the shelter to rehome them or return them to their "homes" if it is safe. A feral cat is different from a stray cat because strays are domesticated cats that have been lost or abandoned where-as feral cats are born in the wild and not used to humans. Unfortunately, many people consider feral cats a nuisance. As much as we try to teach "Trap-Neuter-Return," people still would rather trap them and bring them to the shelter to be euthanized. The shelter by law has to hold the feral cats a certain amount of time before euthanizing them. It is heart breaking to see these cats in the shelter. They have never been within close human contact and usually have bloody noses from trying to



Feral Cat brought into the Shelter

Carson Cats feels that these cats have the same amount of right to live as domesticated cats. In fact, it is almost easier to care for these cats because all they need is food and water once a day! Carson Cats networks for barns, safe rural areas, and backyards to properly rehome these cats. We also find many corporations who want cats on their property to help with the rodent population. While we can't

escape the traps they came in. save them all, Carson Cats rescued and relocated over 200 feral cats last year. We also have found that many of the "Feral" cats we pull are just scared. About 35% of the feral cats we pull end up being sweethearts and become part of loving families.

> If you see some cats in your neighborhood that don't seem to have a home and you want to learn more about Trap-Neuter-Return" programs in your area, visit: www.straycatalliance.org



Same "Feral" Cat Purring up a Storm!

A Letter from our Special Foster for a Special Kitty

Hi Cyndi -

I know there are so many sad stories of animals we don't get to in time...and it takes a lot of courage and strength to continually go back to the shelter seeing all the cat's faces, knowing you won't be able to save them all...

But I was thinking about Bijou and how critical she was when Carson Cats first pulled her out of the shelter. Seizures. Anemia. Low Body Temperature. Lethargic. Not eating. I don't doubt for a second that if Bijou could talk, she would say, "Thank you Carson Cats and everyone who donated towards my vetting so I could get better!!"



Bijou On IVs in the hospital

Before Bijou was sick, she was a gorgeous Turkish Van who was turned into the shelter as a stray. She was a volunteer favorite and was adopted by a member of the public. A month later she was returned for not eating. Bijou was in dying condition. The new owner had not cared for her properly and neglected to take her to the vet even when she noticed Bijou had stopped eating. Bijou was suffering from an extreme case of Hepatic Lipidosis causing her to have seizures and extreme lethargy.

The Shelter called Carson Cats and they rushed her to the emergency room. It was not clear that she would survive, but after 3 weeks of being hospitalized with IVs and a feeding tube, Bijou was ready to move into foster care for more rehabilitation and TLC.



Bijou being hand fed

When Bijou first came to my foster home, the first victory was that she immediately started eating on her own. Yea! But we knew she had other huge milestones to reach before she was going to be 100 % better. She was unable to walk, and would often urinate on herself in her bed. When she did start moving around, she would wobble and frequently would fall down.

Day after Day, Bijou got stronger and finally started to use a litter box. Weeks later, she was stable enough to move into a "quiet room" with a few other low key, special needs kitties, and she continued to improve. After a couple months, Bijou was still considered a special needs kitty but was ready to start looking for A home so I posted her online. And then one day an inquiry came in for Bijou...and not from just anyone -from a previous

special needs kitty parent, who had lovingly cared for a blind kitty with a heart condition for 8 years. We discussed Bijou's needs and she said, "None of what you're telling me scares me." And it was love at first sight.

A few days later, Bijou's new mom wrote me. She said Bijou was doing really well - exploring, eating, finding her litter box, and jumping up on the bed to sleep with her new mom. Yea!

Bijou is the poster child of WHY
Carson Cats matters. Bijou is what
people should think of when they
wonder if what they are doing is
helping at all. YES, YOU ARE
HELPING! YES, YOU ARE MAKING A
DIFFERENCE! I hope people read
this and see the good that comes
out of the time and donations they
give Carson Cats.



Bijou in her Furrever Home!

I would personally like to thank you, and everyone who donated to Bijou's care. I was honored to have this little being as my foster. That she survived, recovered and found a forever home is a <u>sweet</u> little miracle.

Thank You Carson Cats,

Esther & "Byou"

Meet some of our Team!!

Cyndi Zacko - Our Founder



Cyndi is a converted dog lover who quickly learned how one purr can touch your heart! Her love for cats came from taking in a neighborhood cat 8 years ago she named "Mrs.

Moo." Cyndi soon after visited her local animal shelter and was shocked at what she saw. Cyndi made it her mission to bring awareness to all shelter animals in need. Cyndi networks and pulls these animals from the pound, vets them to make them healthy for fosters and gets them into loving homes!

Gail Hokoma - Carson Shelter Volunteer for over 24 years!



Gail started volunteering at the Shelter in 1987 after going to look for her mom's lost cat. The shelter didn't have an

"official" volunteer program then and for years she was the only cat volunteer. Now, 24 years later she is still volunteering! Gail is responsible for helping to identify which cats need the most help and taking their pictures to network!

Caryn Klein - Our "Teckie" & Bottle Feeder Extraordinaire



Caryn Klein is our technically savvy member who works behind the scenes to network animals. Caryn is also a

volunteer with the LA County
Department of Animal Services where
she is an approved county foster for
unweaned kittens and small dogs. She
has taken several courses on how to
care for these little ones and has
saved hundreds of orphaned kittens!

Anna Wong - Foster Coordinator



Anna has been a cat lover all her life, and after losing a cat to kidney failure she decided to adopt from Carson Cats. When she was shown

all the cats that needed homes she knew she could open up her home and heart to foster and volunteer. Fostering has been a huge joy for Anna and has enabled her to give so many wonderful cats a second chance. She specializes in senior, special needs and shyer cats.

Frances Watson - Our Angel



Frances is the head Vet Technician at Jansen Animal Hospital, Carson Cat's primary hospital and boarding facility. Frances saved

thousands of animals in her care and is known to come to the hospital in the middle of the night to check on our babies. She works 6 days and week and then some, holidays included. She is the backbone to our medical team and we could not survive without her!

Did you know??

- One litter of kittens can be produced by more than one father.
- Kittens will start dreaming when they are about one week old.
- A group of adult cats is known as a clowder and a group of kittens is known as a kindle.
- The largest single litter in which every kitten survived was 14.

Awards

Carson Cats is well respected and has been recognized for their rescue work in the community by multiple organizations throughout Los Angeles. Most recently, our founder Cyndi Zacko was awarded Kitten Rescue's Angel Award for her work with the Los Angeles County Shelters.

Carson Cats was also recognized in 2011 by the Fur and Feather Animal Sanctuary by obtaining the "Lester Award" for saving cats and kittens at the worst shelters in Los Angeles.

In 2009, Stray Cat Alliance, recognized Cyndi with an award for her rescue work with neighborhood cats trapped and brought into the Los Angeles County Shelter Systems.



Lester Award

Carson Cats

P.O. Box 960 Hermosa Beach, CA 90254 www.carsoncats.com

Carson Cats is a cat rescue that is dedicated to rescuing cats and kittens from the 6 Los Angeles County shelters, mainly Carson Shelter located in Gardena, Ca. Over the past 6 years, Carson Cats has rescued over 6500 animals (including cats, dogs, rabbits, hamsters, and guinea pigs) from the Los Angeles County Shelter System which has one of the highest euthanasia rates in the country.



Thank you to Our Volunteers and Donors!

Volunteers and Fosters:

Cyndi Zacko Frances Watson

Caryn Klein Gina Lynn Gail Hokama Jaime Mas Anna Wona Jeff Feicht

Andrew Smith Jennifer Van Zyl Carole Fortier Lacey Ferris

Catherine Wheeler Lisa Venzke Christina Wickham Nicki Coronado

Christy Jackson Pat Burnett

Daisy Church Patricia Penfield Paula and Roger Gallion Reaina Stanton Cynthia Guerrero Rachel Hoffman Esther Alapy Shirley Halford

Special Thanks to our Veterinarians & Rescue Partners!

Evelyn Gray

Jansen Animal Hospital South Bay Cats

Beverly Oaks Animal Hospital Caring Friends Cat Rescue

Primary Care Animal Hospital Kitten Rescue Stray Cat Alliance Cat Connection Heaven on Earth Animal Society VCA Antech

Donor All Stars:

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