

The Inside

Scoop

In Memory of Bran



Bran was a very special old cat who spent the last few weeks of his life at our humble little shelter, warm, dry and very much loved by all who met him.

He came to our attention when a woman stopped by our table at the Volunteer Fair held in our local mall and mentioned the very sick old cat she had been feeding in her yard for many months. We offered to help and quickly got him to our veterinarian for a check up and medical attention. One of the first obvious problems was a long blade of coarse grass lodged up one nostril and the cause of a severe infection. One eye was clouded over, the result of an old injury and it wasn't likely that anything could be done to reverse the damage.

The next day Bran came to the shelter and began a course of antibiotics to get rid of the infection that made it so difficult for him to breathe.

By the end of the first week he began to show improvement and was up and about the shelter ready to welcome all the volunteers, always eager to curl up on a warm lap and purr as best he could while his little front paws "kneaded" away quite happily.

He chose a bed up high and dry where he could keep his one good eye on the comings and goings at the shelter and we all looked forward to seeing his dear little old face as we came through the door.

A couple came to the shelter to look for a cat to add to their "cat family" and when they met Bran, he was "the One!". As soon as his medications were finished and he was better he would go to his new home to be loved and pampered forever.

We were all so moved by the plight of this sweet, gentle old fellow and tried to help him get well in every way we could. Some brought him special treats, some brought vitamins and health supplements. He got gentle

massages, hugs and kisses, he had songs sung to him, prayers said on his behalf and he just seemed so happy, so content to be warm, dry, fed and loved.

Sadly the piece of grass was not the source of all his health problems. We began to notice that he was losing weight and strength despite all our efforts to help him. A trip to the animal hospital and more blood tests confirmed our worst suspicions. Our dear little friend, Bran, was very sick and there was nothing we mortals could do to restore his youth and health. Life on the street as a homeless abandoned cat had taken its toll. All we could do was provide hospice care for this very gentle old cat in his final days. Thankfully he had that time, though brief, at our shelter surrounded by love and kindness, not a miserable death alone out in the rain and cold of winter.

Here's to you old friend! May your food bowl always be full and the mice plentiful and playful! We miss you...

We extend special thanks to all our supporters who so generously made Bran's last days full of warmth, care and love.

Submitted by Doreen Stocks

Barnum's New Home

Bashful Barnum, featured in our last newsletter, has found peace and contentment in the home and heart of lovely Lee Ann.

An FIV-positive kitty with serious trust issues, Barnum was afraid of strangers, and would only come out of hiding at the shelter long enough to eat. Now, after several months in a stable environment - and with the new name

of Leroy - Lee Ann reports that he readily greets visitors, introducing himself by jumping up on their laps and settling down for a good purr, basking in the attention he feels he deserves.

"His overall condition is really improved," says Lee Ann. "He's gained weight and his fur is shiny, thick and soft. And he plays like a kitten. He really is the king of the house now."

L e r o y - French for "the king." It appears that Barnum has settled into his new home, and his new name, with ease.





Cats, Pregnancy and Toxoplasmosis



If you're expecting a baby, you may have heard of

toxoplasmosis because it can cause serious birth defects. A woman who acquires toxoplasmosis during pregnancy can transmit the infection to her unborn child, which can lead to miscarriage or an array of malformations at birth. Because one of the ways to become infected is through contact with the infected feces of cats, many pregnant women try to lower their risk by giving their cat away or putting the cat outside. However, you can easily avoid contracting toxoplasmosis from cat feces *without* giving up your beloved feline.

What is Toxoplasmosis?

Toxoplasmosis is an infection caused by the single-celled parasite, *Toxoplasma gondii* (*T. gondii*) that can infect all species of animals, who serve as intermediate hosts. Toxoplasmosis has serious risks for babies that include mental retardation, blindness, learning disabilities, stillbirth or pre-term birth.

The disease-causing parasite can sometimes be found in the feces of cats who ingest raw meat, birds, mice or contaminated soil. It is extremely unlikely that a cat kept indoors will carry toxoplasmosis. Outdoor cats have a slightly higher risk. Cats are the only species of animal to shed the infectious stage in their feces; however, other animals can disseminate toxoplasmosis if their infected meat is eaten without proper cooking.

How is toxoplasmosis transmitted?

Humans can acquire toxoplasmosis in one of three ways, but rarely from an infected cat. Most commonly, people contract the disease by eating undercooked meat that contains *T. gondii* within tissue cysts, or from unwashed fruit and vegetables; by not washing their hands after gardening or handling soil; or by transmission of the disease to an unborn child if the mother acquires a primary infection while pregnant.

What is the likelihood of contracting toxoplasmosis?

A study in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, and a report in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, showed no correlation between cat ownership and infection with toxoplasmosis, even for immune compromised individuals such as AIDS patients. Several factors keep the chance of such transmission low.

First of all, only cats that ingest tissue cysts acquire infection. Within the feline population, this would be limited to outdoor cats that hunt and eat rodents, as well as cats that are fed raw meat by their owners.

After a cat has been infected with toxoplasmosis once, he typically acquires immunity and is extremely unlikely to get an active infection again. So, normally, an infected cat would be infectious to humans only after being exposed to *T. gondii* for the first time. An outdoor hunting cat is often exposed to the disease as a kitten and is, therefore, less likely to transmit the infection as he ages.

As well, the period during which infected cats are infectious to humans (through eggs shed in feces) is very brief usually in the first 2-3 weeks of infection and one to five days must elapse after feces are passed before they become infectious. This means if litter boxes are cleaned at least daily, transmission of the infection by litter scooping is entirely preventable.

Finally, since the infectious eggs are transmitted by ingestion, in order to contract toxoplasmosis, a woman would have to make contact with contaminated feces in the litter box and then, without washing her hands, touch her mouth or otherwise transmit the contaminated fecal matter to her digestive system.

How can you reduce the risk of toxoplasmosis?

Even though it is unlikely that a woman will contract toxoplasmosis from her cat, it's a good idea to err on the side of caution. The following recommendations will help cat owners expecting a child to reduce their risk of contracting toxoplasmosis.

- ~Avoid undercooked meat. Cook meat thoroughly to over 151 F degrees. Wash hands and anything else that comes in contact with raw meat such as cutting boards, knives, etc.
- ~Wash all uncooked vegetables thoroughly.
- ~Wash hands thoroughly before eating.
- ~Wear gloves when working in the garden or with soil, and wash hands thoroughly afterwards. Toxoplasmosis remains in the soil or in cat feces (once active) for up to 18 months. If gloves are not worn, hands need to be washed thoroughly following soil contact.
- ~Change your cat's litter on a daily basis before eggs have had time to become infective, and dispose of cat feces carefully. Periodically sanitize litter boxes with boiling water. If you don't have help to keep the litter box clean, wear rubber gloves when changing the litter and thoroughly wash your hands afterwards.
- ~Cover children's sandboxes when not in use and dispose of any contaminated sand.
- ~Keep cats indoors and away from wildlife. Cats usually acquire the disease by eating live animals such as mice, or through contact with other

Dog Watch

Cats, Pregnancy and Toxoplasmosis Continued...

infected cats, cat feces, or infected soil.

~Feed cats only packaged cat food or well-cooked meat, never raw meat or leftovers.

If a woman is immune to toxoplasmosis before pregnancy, then the baby is safe. Approximately one-third of women in the United States are immune to the infection, and the likelihood of immunity is higher for women who have owned cats for a long time. If you are infected while you are pregnant there is an antibiotic for reducing the likelihood that the baby will be infected. If you are a cat owner and you are considering getting pregnant, it would be beneficial to test for immunity of toxoplasmosis before you get pregnant. (Immunity is determined by a simple blood test from your physician.)



Getting rid of your feline companion is NOT a necessary precaution. Cat ownership has many benefits that are immeasurable in terms of companionship and love. While it is possible for cats to transmit toxoplasmosis, the risk of your feline friend passing the disease to you is low, especially if you follow the recommendations above. So, your cat can safely remain as a loved member of the family as you await your new arrival.



Did You Know?

What most people do not know is that toxoplasmosis is more commonly found in uncooked or undercooked meat, and that avoiding the disease is very simple.

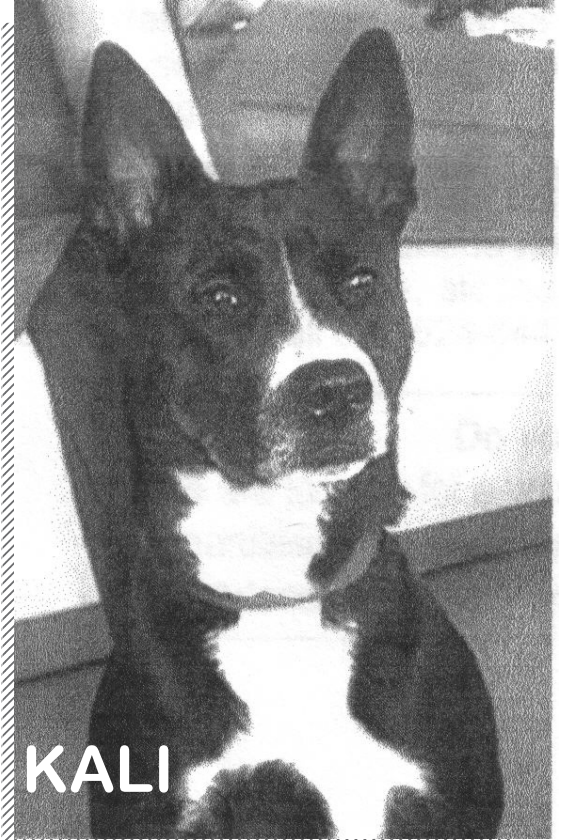
Kali - the Sanskrit word meaning energy and dark goddess. It is also the name of a sweet and loving dog with a lot of disappointment in her short life.

She originally came to us two years ago from a run down home. Her people wanted to have her put to sleep but couldn't afford the fee at the SPCA. She was nervous, but she had a wonderful underlying sweet personality that just needed to be uncovered.

In a warm and loving foster home she came out of her shell and she soon found a wonderful home and extended family with the daughter and granddaughter of her new Mom. She enjoyed all the luxuries a dog loves best - good food, lots of love and free running play and exercise at the doggy park. Kali was happy but unfortunately the happiness was short lived.

Her Mom got sick after two years and tragically passed away. Once again Kali needed our help.

Now back in foster care she is back at the dog parks playing and having a good time. She shares her foster home with a feisty little Jack Russell Terrier and they are the best of friends.



KALI

She is the sweetest, wiggliest, most devoted girl and needs another wonderful, permanent home to call her own. She's great with kids, wooing everyone who meets her.

If you can give Kali, our beautiful dark goddess, the wonderful loving home she needs, please contact us for more information on adoption.

Submitted by Toni Reed

Please...Don't Litter!



They look cute now, but there are not enough good homes for all the kittens and puppies born each year.

Please contact us about our low cost spay/neuter program for low income families.

PLEASE...help us to help them.



Sponsors

- Alpine Animal Hospital
- Angela Kerslake Law Corporation
- Animal Critical Care
- Anipet
- Best Friend Pet Food & Supply
- Bosley's, North Road, Coquitlam
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- Westac
- Zen Dogs Canine Services

The Royal City Humane Society, and the creatures who have been entrusted to our care, are grateful to have been remembered with these gifts.

The Tail End

RCHS Fundraising Garage Sales



Our spring garage sale on May 8th was a howling success, raising over

\$1,600. As always the total amount raised goes directly towards food, veterinary care, and supplies for the animals we help.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who came out to support us and took home some gently used treasures, and also to all the volunteers who donated their time and efforts to organizing the event.



Submitted by Our volunteer Cartoonist...Nick Cole



Coming Events

August

29th - Doggy Fun Day, Queens Park

September

September 11th - Mark your calendars for our fall garage sale on Saturday, September 11th outside the Safeway at Royal Square on McBride and 8th Avenue. We would appreciate any donations of household goods, furniture, books, etc (no clothing please) - and, as always, volunteers to help with the event. Please call 604-524-6447 if you have items to donate or some time to spare.

19th-Urban Farmers Fall Fair, Queensborough Community Centre.

19th - Pet Lovers Digest Day in the Park, Vancouver (location TBA)

Do You...

Love To Coordinate Garage Sales?

We are looking for a volunteer who would be willing to take on the task of organizing our two annual garage sales (spring & fall). If you have some experience and some time to spare, please call us at 604-524-6447



Mailing Address:
Box 0102, 641 Columbia Street
New Westminster
B.C. V3M 1A8
604 524-6447
www.rchs.bc.ca

Royal City Humane Society

Yes! I would like to make a donation to the RCHS to help animals in need.

- One-Time Donation Monthly Donation
- \$25 \$35 \$50 \$75 \$100
- \$200 Other \$ _____
- Cheque Enclosed
- I Do Not Require A Receipt
- Donations may be made on our Website www.rchs.bc.ca by using PAY PAL

Please complete the information below

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____

Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____

Tel: (____) _____

E-Mail: _____

The Royal City Humane Society is a registered, no-kill animal charity based in New Westminster, BC. As the only charity animal shelter in New Westminster, RCHS campaigns against pet overpopulation and cares for stray, injured and abandoned animals by testing them for disease, sterilizing and tattooing and finding them new homes. RCHS is 100% volunteer run. Funding is obtained through various fund raising activities, memberships and donations, and all funds are spent on the welfare of the animals.

Registered Charity # 89683-2532-RR0001