



**P.O. Box 1135, Midland, MI 48641**

**989-689-6198**

**www.sosar@charter.net**

**www.sosanimalrescue.org**

SOS Animal Rescue Newsletter • Volume 07, Issue 2 • April 15, 2007



## **Parade Your Pet on Saturday, May 19**

Strut your mutt and other family pets at the Third Annual Parade Your Pet on Saturday, May 19 near the Farmer's Market in downtown Midland. Pets assemble at 12:00 noon, and the parade starts at 12:30 p.m. Call 839-8433 to register. Prizes will be awarded for best costumes, best tricks, and more!

## **Kids' Day Recap**

It was fun for all during Kids' Day at the Midland Mall (see photo). This was a great opportunity for SOS Animal Rescue to interact with kids of all ages. Drawings, stamping, stickers, painting, and coloring were great draws to our table. Winners of the drawings were Katie Waffie and Megan, dog baskets; Arlo Turpin, Beanie Baby basket; and Michelle Monville and Billy Chilman, cat baskets.



## **Rummage Sale**

The annual SOS rummage sale will be held on June 15-16. Set-up will take place on Thursday, June 14 in the evening. If you would like items picked up from your home, please call 689-6198 to make arrangements. Visit the SOS website at [www.sosanimalrescue.org](http://www.sosanimalrescue.org) for more details.

## **SOS EVENTS**

**Sunday, April 15**

**Noon – 3:00 p.m.**

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

**Monday, April 16**

**6:30 p.m.**

Monthly SOS Meeting  
Conf. Room B at Grace A. Dow Library

**Saturday, April 21**

**Noon – 3:00 p.m.**

Adopt-a-Thon at Petco

**Saturday, May 5**

**Noon – 3:00 p.m.**

Adopt-a-Thon at Petco

**Sunday, May 6**

**Noon – 3:00 p.m.**

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

**Saturday, May 19**

**Noon – 3:00 p.m.**

Parade Your Pet  
Downtown Midland

**Sunday, May 20**

**Noon – 3:00 p.m.**

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

**Monday, May 21**

**6:30 p.m.**

Monthly SOS Meeting  
Conf. Room B at Grace A. Dow Library

**Saturday, June 2**

**Noon – 3:00 p.m.**

Adopt-a-Thon at Petco

**Sunday, June 3**

**Noon – 3:00 p.m.**

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

**Saturday, June 16**

**Noon – 3:00 p.m.**

Adopt-a-Thon at Petco

**Sunday, June 17**

**Noon – 3:00 p.m.**

Adopt-a-Thon at PetSmart

**Monday, June 18**

**6:30 p.m.**

Monthly SOS Meeting  
Conf. Room B at Grace A. Dow Library

*Adopt-a-Thons may be cancelled  
if no pets are available for adoption.*

# THANK YOU!

**Michael & Diana Dalton**

**Gayle Blues in memory of  
Kenzie Mae Heltzel**

**Mr. & Mrs. Richard Heiny**

**Gloria Olson**

**Edward Ricks**

**Mr. & Mrs. Sonnenschein**

**Jennifer Spiegel in honor of Winnie**

**Luanne Stickley  
for making catnip toys**

**TWIST & Red Cross  
for dog and cat food, treats,  
and dog and cat toys**

## Kitten Training Tip

When teaching your new kitten the rules of the house, be consistent. If you don't want your pet cruising the bookshelves or sniffing your food while you eat, train her on what is and is not allowed in your home from the get-go. It may take your cat a little time to realize that he's never allowed on the bookshelf, but he will figure it out if you and everyone else in the household faithfully enforce the rules.

*from February 2007 Cat Fancy*

## Just for Fun

### Bark Up the Wrong Tree

**Meaning:** To be off course, or to search for something in the wrong place.

**Origins:** During hunting excursions, coonhounds chase a raccoon up a tree. The dogs remain at the base of the tree barking and baying until the hunter catches up to shoot the raccoon. Sometimes, especially during night hunts, a raccoon stealthily crawls along the branches and escapes to the safety of a different tree, leaving the dogs literally barking up the wrong tree.

### Let the Cat Out of the Bag

**Meaning:** to reveal a secret or disclose information, usually in a surprising manner.

**Origins:** Centuries ago at English county fairs, merchants sold piglets in burlap sacks. Swindlers took advantage of unsuspecting buyers by swapping the piglet for a cat, hoping the buyer wouldn't ask to look in the bag, which of course would let the cat out of the bag and reveal the ruse.

### Going the Whole Hog

**Meaning:** Doing something wholeheartedly, completely, going all the way.

**Origins:** In the early 19th century, a "hog" was slang in the United States for a ten-cent piece. Someone willing to spend an extra ten cents would be spending the whole hog, or going all out.

## Scratching and Destructive Behavior in Cats

Cats need to scratch for a variety of reasons. It sharpens their nails and removes the outer sheath as the nail grows. Cats will reach up and pull with their nails in order to stretch the muscles in their legs and along their sides. Cats also have scent glands on the pads of their feet and use scratching to mark their territory.

Often it's not scratching that get cats into trouble, it's what they choose to scratch that's the problem. Providing an appropriate scratching post for your cat will save your furniture and your carpet.

### The Scratching Post

It is important that your scratching post be tall enough for your cat to stretch out full length on the vertical surface. If not, she will find something taller, such as the arm of your couch. Acceptable surface materials for the post are sisal (rough-textured rope) or bare wood. Avoid posts that are covered with carpet. Cats are very sensitive to texture and will often use *any* carpet, on the post or on the floor.

Your cat's post should be in the room where she spends most of her time. If the post is in the back bedroom and your cat spends the majority of her day on the couch in the living room, she may not be motivated to search for the post when the couch is very handy.

When introducing a new scratching post to your cat, it's important that the post be more appealing than other objects. Sprinkling the post with catnip or placing tasty treats on and around the post will encourage your cat to use it. You may also use a toy that dangles, hold it above the post and play with your cat, encouraging her to climb it to get the toy.

Cat boards made of corrugated cardboard and sprinkled with catnip also work well. They can be hung from door knobs and used in the same manner as the posts.

### Saving Your Furniture

If your cat is already in the habit of using your furniture as a scratching post, a few preventive measures may be in order as well as introducing a scratching post. Trimming your cat's nails every couple of weeks will dull the nails and make it harder to puncture the material. You may also check into Soft Paws, rubber caps that fit over the cat's nails and prevent destructive scratching. Soft Paws can be obtained from your veterinarian.

Placing your cat's scratching post in front of the area she previously used and sprinkling it with catnip will help to redirect the scratching to the appropriate object. Once she is using the post, you can gradually move it to an acceptable location.

*from the Michigan Humane Society*



## Petsensory Perception

A cat disappears when her owners go on vacation each year, yet arrives back at the house an hour before they return. A dog runs to the door, the moment his owner leaves work, and sits and waits expectantly until she arrives home. A man sits on the couch, his dog slumbering in the next room. He thinks, "I should take Daisy for a walk," and suddenly his dog comes bounding in the room, leash in mouth, anxious to go. A cat curls up next to the phone just before a family member calls, but never when anyone else is about to call. These kinds of stories are told by many pet owners from all over the world.

Most dogs and cats are very attuned to their owners, and quickly learn their patterns, read their body language and anticipate what's going to happen next. But there are so many stories of pets seeming to know more than their natural senses would allow that it has been the subject of study and debate for years. Are their natural senses even greater than we ever imagined? Or do they have a sixth sense? Some kind of psychic connection to their owners?

Biologist Rupert Sheldrake, author of *Dogs That Know When Their Owner is Coming Home* believes that animals have perceptive abilities of telepathy and

premonitions. Veterinarian and author, Dr. Allan Schoen says in his book, *Kindred Spirits*, that people and animals are intimately connected. Pets whom we feel especially close to, seem to understand our needs, read our moods, and sometimes even communicate with us on a level that transcends words or body language.

Can pets be so connected and attuned to their owners when they are far apart, even when there is no possible way they could be using their sense of smell or hearing? Physician and author Dr. Larry Dossey, says there is a connection between all species, which is not limited by locality. He refers to it as a "nonlocal mind." Consciousness is not restricted to the brain or the body or time or place. Therefore people and animals can have an effect on each other, even when miles apart.

Traditional scientists remain skeptical about psychic abilities among people-let alone pets! They say much of the phenomenon can be explained in other ways, through pets' acute senses of hearing and smell, reading human body language, or noting other cues happening in their environment. Dogs and cats live mostly in a scent world, and are also very sensitive

to sounds. It may be that when an owner thinks about taking her dog for a walk, this happy thought causes a slight change in her body chemistry, which the dog can smell, and associate with walks. Some who swear their dog knows when their owner is coming home, may find their pets are unable to do so when they come home in a different car.

Another simpler explanation is that owners notice their pets' mysterious behaviors only when related events coincide. The cat may curl up by the phone now and then, but the owner doesn't notice. If the cat happens to sit by the phone when "dad" calls, the owner is more likely to take note of it.

Our pets live on a sensory level that's different from our own. Though we share the same five known senses, dogs and cats take in their world mostly through scent and sound and act on instinct. We take in our world mostly through sight and act on intellect and emotion. So it's not surprising that our pets are able to clue in on things that we can't imagine could be possible. But sometimes, hard science has no explanation for extraordinary pet perception. The debate goes on.

by *Petcentric* from Purina



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SOS ANIMAL RESCUE  
ARE ALWAYS APPRECIATED!**

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tax-deductible contribution today!**

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## Loving Care for Older Cats

Not long ago, cats were considered seniors at eight years old. Today, it's not unusual for veterinarians to have feline patients in their twenties. Thanks to improved nutrition, living indoors, and advances in veterinary medicine, cats live longer and are now considered older at 12 to 14 years, says Richard Goldstein, DVM, assistant professor in small animal medicine at Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, whose oldest feline patient reached a healthy 22 years old.

"Growing older is not a disease," he emphasizes. "While it's true that senior cats are more likely to get different conditions, some older cats are perfectly normal and don't change at all."

Older cats tend to be less active and playful, they may sleep more, gain or lose weight, and have trouble reaching their favorite places. Don't chalk up health or behavior changes—often gradual—to old age, however. Such changes can be signs of common diseases or dental problems that should be addressed by your veterinarian.

Making sure older cats have easy access to the things they enjoy and/or need is critical, says Emily Levine, DVM, animal behavior resident of the Animal Behavior Clinic at Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. "We remember to give them medications, but we tend to forget about addressing food, water and litter box issues," she says.

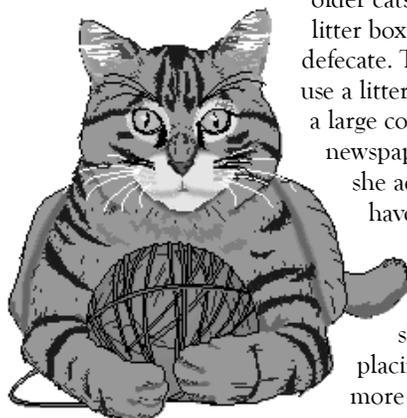
Indeed, many cat owners don't realize the practical things they can do for their aging cats. To help your older cat enjoy her golden years, consider these simple suggestions.

**See the vet.** Schedule regular veterinary exams to enhance your older cat's well-being. "Six-month checkups for geriatric cats are great," Dr. Goldstein notes. "For healthy cats, a yearly geriatric exam - including blood work and X-rays - along with a smaller exam in between, is ideal," he recommends.

**Think warm.** Cats like to seek out warm places to rest. Make sure your older cat's favorite soft bed or resting place is not in a drafty area of your home. Too much heat, though, can potentially burn a cat who can't move quickly, so be sure to think warm, not hot.

**Provide easy access to basic needs.** As cats age they are more prone to getting arthritis and may have reduced control over their bowels and bladder, Dr. Levine says. It's a good idea to install litter boxes on every floor to make them easy to reach. And some

older cats may climb into a normal litter box to urinate but not to defecate. To help solve this problem, use a litter box with very low sides (try a large cookie sheet) or place newspaper around the litter box, she advises. "Older cats should have easy access to food, water, and litter boxes, so if they choose not to climb stairs they don't have to," she adds. This may mean placing food and water bowls in more than one place as well.



**Help him get there.** If your older cat can no longer jump on his favorite windowsill, create box steps, ramps, or purchase pet stairs that allow him to safely reach a special spot on his own. This also works for a cat that wants to reach a favorite chair or sofa. The idea is to provide firm footing; for example, cover steps or a ramp with carpet to prevent slipping.

**Gently groom.** Older cats can benefit from more frequent hands-on help if their self-grooming begins to wane. (Be aware that a sudden lack of grooming may signal a health problem.) This is particularly crucial for long-haired cats who become uncomfortably matted. Gently brushing or combing removes loose hairs and stimulates circulation and sebaceous gland secretions, returning luster to the coat.

**Turn on a light.** Night-lights help older cats with poor vision or eyesight problems navigate at night. If your cat is blind, try to keep your cat's environment as stationary and consistent as possible, including litter boxes and furniture, Dr. Levine recommends. To avoid disorienting or startling a blind cat, do not pick him up unless necessary and call his name before approaching him.

**Give a deaf cat a point of view.** You should approach a cat with hearing problems from the front rather than behind to avoid startling or scaring him. Keep him safely inside your home to protect him from cars and predators.

**Keep her kitten-free and playful.** "I do not recommend getting a young kitten to rejuvenate your older cat - a rambunctious kitten climbing all over your cat may be more detrimental than helpful, and people have a tendency to focus on the young cat and ignore the older one," Dr. Levine says. Instead, find gentle ways to encourage your older cat to play with you, she suggests. Try waving a wand, going for a walk with your cat inside your home, and playing chase the kibble, one piece at a time.

**Don't forget the basics.** Fresh water and good food are vital to cats of any age, but may be particularly important for older cats. Your veterinarian can offer advice on choosing a diet that provides appropriate nutrition and the right amount of calories for your aging cat. "It's especially important that senior cats have easy access to clean water because kidney function frequently deteriorates in older cats," Dr. Goldstein says. "Consider mixing canned and dry food to let your cat absorb the water canned food offers," he suggests.

**Older cats cherish predictable days more than younger cats do.** "Just as we become set in our ways as we get older, cats do too," Dr. Goldstein says. "Some cats may need more emotional support as they age and others may prefer to be left alone," he explains. "They may become more dependent on relationships and require more attention. It may be harder for them to deal with changes." Sticking to normal routines reassures them, he adds.

"Older cats enjoy spending time with their human family members, Dr. Levine concludes. "It is important to give them the extra tender loving care that they'll need for many years to come."

by Susan Easterly from Cornell Feline Health Center

## Show Off Your Pet

Are you beaming with pride over a pet that you adopted from SOS? Send us a picture of your pet with a brief description, and we may print it in an upcoming newsletter. We'd appreciate either a JPEG or a good quality photograph. Send entries to Darlene Andrews at darandrews@gmail.com or SOS, P.O. Box 1135, Midland, MI 48641.

## You know you have a dog if...

- ...you own thousands of tennis balls but no racket.
- ...people say you look like your dog and you take it as a compliment.
- ...you chose your bank because the drive-thru teller gives doggy treats.
- ...he takes up more space on the bed than you do.

**You make a living by what you get. You make a lifetime by what you give.**  
- Winston Churchill

## SPAY/NEUTER STATISTICS

**2005**

Female Cats	90
Male Cats	64
Female Dogs	31
Male Dogs	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>202</b>

**2006**

Female Cats	90
Male Cats	57
Female Dogs	32
Male Dogs	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>209</b>

**2007**

Female Cats	8
Male Cats	6
Female Dogs	3
Male Dogs	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>

## Midland County Spay/Neuter Program

The Midland County Spay/Neuter Program offers a voucher to help offset the cost of sterilization and is intended to service limited income homes, senior citizens on a fixed income, and other hardship cases. Spaying and neutering all pets is an integral part of any effort aimed at reducing the number of animals destroyed each year. Our program provides assistance to owners who cannot take this important step due to lack of funds. If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation to the Midland County Spay/Neuter Program, please fill out the contribution card below.

**THANK YOU FOR DONATING TO  
THE SPAY/NEUTER PROGRAM!**

**Consumers Energy Foundation  
in recognition of Stephanie Nearman**

**Tricia Eidsmoe**

**Janet Fergin**

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Midland, MI 48641-2323

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www.sosanimalrescue.org

#### Officers

Heather Kettelhohn, President  
Adam Paveglio, Vice President  
Darlene Andrews, Secretary  
Carol Arnosky, Treasurer

#### Mission Statement

SOS Animal Rescue is a non-profit  
501(c)3 organization whose mission is  
to reduce the number of unwanted pets  
in Midland County through placement  
and public education.

#### Board of Directors

Chris Erskine  
Shelley Park

## THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS!

