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SOS Animal Rescue Newsletter • Volume 11, Issue 4 • October 1, 2011

Family Fare New Corporate Sponsor of PAL Program

On Saturday, September 24, Family Fare announced corporate sponsorship of the SOS Animal Rescue Pet Assistance Locker Program. The event was celebrated with Family Fare providing free donut holes, cider, coffee, and cake. In addition, a hot dog and soda sale was held with all proceeds going to the PAL Program. Cats and dogs were available for adoption; crafts, games, and prizes for folks big and small were available; and T-shirts were for sale.

Store Manager Paul Conn welcomed other local rescues and emergency food banks to the festivities to highlight how collaboration in the community can ensure success for all. It was a great day for the announcement and many thanks go to Family Fare staff, Heart of Michigan Rescue, A Few Steps from Home Pet Rescue, Senior Services, and the other non-profit organizations that helped make this a successful event.



(above) Store Manager Paul Conn and PAL cart that is placed permanently at Family Fare. (below) Volunteer Doug Dean helps with the hot dog sales.



(above) PAL Coordinator Lori Tubek and extreme couponers Stacey Scott and Pat Hughes donated all of their pet-related coupons to PAL. (below) Senior Services shared their emergency animal assistance program for the elderly.



August was adopted by Wade White, a Family Fare employee.



Ear Disease in Cats

“My cat’s ears have a terrible odor. What could it be?” “My kitten has been scratching her ears. The ears have dark, crumbly material in them. What should I do?” These are some of the most commonly asked questions of veterinarians.

Signs of Ear Disease

Every day we see cats who have problems with their ears. Signs of these ear problems include:

- Odor
- Scratching or rubbing of ears and head
- Discharge in the ears
- Redness or swelling of the ear canal
- Shaking of the head or tilting it to one side
- Pain around the ears
- Changes in behavior such as depression or irritability

Ear disease is one of the most common conditions we see in pets. The medical name for inflammation of the outer ear canal is ‘otitis externa’. One study found that from 2 to 6.6 percent of cats admitted to hospitals were presented because of otitis externa.

Causes of Ear Disease

Cats can have ear problems for many different reasons. When we see a cat with ear disease we need to think about the possibility of:

- Allergies: Cats with allergies, either to food or something they inhale, may have ear problems. As a matter of fact, the ear problem may be the first sign of the allergy. Since the allergy changes the environment within the ear, we sometimes see secondary infections with bacteria or yeast. If we just treat the infection, we are not getting to the root of the problem. We need to treat the allergies too.
- Parasites: The ear mite, *Otodectes cynotis*, is a common cause of ear problems especially in kittens. Some animals are hypersensitive to the mites and the resultant itching can be intense. These animals may scratch so much they severely traumatize the ear.
- Bacteria and Yeast: Numerous types of bacteria and the yeast, *Malassezia pachydermatis*, cause ear infections. The normal, healthy ear has a good defense against these organisms, but if the ear environment changes due to allergies, hormone abnormalities, or moisture, the bacteria and yeast can greatly multiply and break down these defenses.
- Foreign Bodies: Plant awns, those little “stick-tights” that cling to our clothes and our cats’ fur, can sometimes enter the ear canal. Their presence causes irritation, the cat scratches, and before you know it we have a

traumatized, infected ear. So if you have a cat who goes outside, be sure to routinely check the ears.

- Trauma: As we described above, self-inflicted trauma to the ear due to scratching can exacerbate ear problems.
- Hormonal Abnormalities: Deficiencies or excesses of various hormones can result in skin and ear problems. Thyroid hormone, glucocorticoids produced by the adrenal gland, and sex hormones all influence the health of the skin and ears.
- Ear Environment: Bacteria and yeast could not ask for a better environment to live in than a warm, dark, moist ear canal.
- Other Causes: There are various rare hereditary diseases that occur in different breeds or lines and affect the ears. Eosinophilic granulomas are related to a disorder of the immune system and can occur in the ears of cats. Squamous cell carcinomas, melanomas and other tumors can be seen in the ears.

Diagnosis

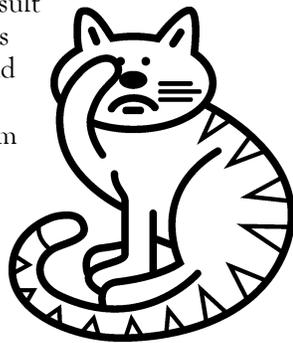
Because there are many potential causes of ear problems, we cannot just say it’s a bacterial infection, dispense antibiotics, and it will go away. Often more work is needed. Your veterinarian can use an otoscope to look down into the ear canal and determine the amount of inflammation present, if the tympanic membrane (ear drum) is involved, and if there are any foreign bodies, tumors or other potential causes of the problem. Swabs of the ear can be taken, smeared on a microscope slide, stained and examined for bacteria, yeast and mites. A thorough history and physical exam may help determine if this could be a hormonal, allergic or hereditary problem. If these are suspected, further diagnostic testing would be needed. If a bacterial infection does not respond to the first antibiotic therapy, a culture and sensitivity may need to be performed to select a different antibiotic.

Treatment

The treatment is going to depend on what caused the ear problem and what secondary conditions are there as a result. Antibiotics are used for bacterial infections and antifungals for yeast infections. Glucocorticoids such as dexamethasone are often included in these preparations to reduce the amount of inflammation in the ear. Ear problems caused by a systemic disease such as a hormone abnormality or allergy must include a therapy that treats the whole cat, such as hormonal replacement or allergy testing and hyposensitization (immunotherapy).

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- **Allergies:** Allergies are commonly treated with regular ear cleaning with an ear cleaning solution, antihistamines, and fatty acid supplements. Sometimes corticosteroids are needed. These may be given in an oral or injectable form, or they can be applied topically. Allergy testing and immunotherapy (hyposensitization) may be the best way to cure the ear problem.
- **Ear mites:** Ear mites can cause a dry, dark, crumbly debris in the ear that resembles coffee grounds. Ear mites are more common in cats than dogs. For this condition, ear cleaning followed by an ear medication to kill mites will eliminate the problem, although the treatment may need to be continued over several weeks depending upon the product used.
- **Yeast:** Yeast can cause severe ear problems. We usually observe a brown waxy exudate and a bad odor. Daily cleaning of the ears will help, but often these infections are difficult to treat, and special medications need to be given since antibiotics do not kill yeast. If you suspect a yeast infection in your cat's ears, consult your veterinarian.
- **Bacterial Infections:** Bacterial infections can also have a bad odor and often have a more yellowish exudate. If it's a severe or chronic condition, ear cleaning alone will not take care of the problem and antibiotics will almost always be necessary. Again, consult your veterinarian. Ear infections of the canal, if severe, can spread to the middle and inner ear, so prompt attention to the problem is always best.



Regardless of the cause of the ear disease, we must always keep the ear canal clean.

Cleaning Ears

Your cat's ear is more L-shaped than yours, and debris loves to collect at the corner of the L. To remove this debris, fill your cat's ear canal with a good ear cleaner. Ear cleaners should be slightly acidic but should NOT sting. Massage the base of the ear for 20-30 seconds to soften and release the debris. Wipe out the loose debris and excess fluid with a cotton ball. Repeat this procedure until you see no more debris. Depending on your cat's ear condition, you may have to start out doing this twice a day.

Cotton swabs can be used to clean the inside of the earflap and the part of the ear canal you can see. They should NOT be used farther down in the ear canal since that tends to pack debris in the ear canal, rather than removing it.

Some ear problems are so painful, the cat must be anesthetized to do a good job of cleaning the ears. You may find your cat does not like to have her ears cleaned because it is uncomfortable. Talking to her during the process, stopping momentarily to give her a treat if she's doing well (we don't want to reward fussiness!) and doing something fun afterwards may all help. After the ear is clean, let the cat shake her head and allow some time for the ears to dry. Then you can apply any ear medication that was prescribed.

Preventing Ear Disease

The key to healthy ears is to keep them clean. Check your cat's ears weekly. A slight amount of waxy buildup may be present in normal ears. Treat any underlying condition that predisposes your cat to ear problems. Remember, if your cat is showing severe discomfort, the ears have a bad smell, or the ear canals look abnormal, contact your veterinarian. If your cat has a ruptured or weakened eardrum, some ear cleansers and medications could do more harm than good.

Reprinted from purina.com. Written by Holly Frisby, DVM. Veterinary Services Department, Drs. Foster & Smith, Inc.

To date, PAL has helped 43 dogs, 112 cats, 3 birds, and 2 rabbits!

Spay/Neuter Statistics

From January 2004 to September 2011, SOS Animal Rescue has spayed/neutered 1373 cats and dogs. If each surgery prevents one unwanted

SPAY/NEUTER	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Female Cats	41	90	93	109	90	64	74	44
Male Cats	26	64	57	70	49	32	42	20
Female Dogs	14	31	32	30	44	28	39	24
Male Dogs	13	17	30	41	20	6	21	18
TOTAL	94	202	212	250	203	130	176	106

litter, the spay/neuter program has reduced the number of unwanted pets by over 500 in 2010 and 5000 since 2004.



**The Soggy Dog Swim
at Plymouth Park Pool
was a great
time for all.
Thanks to Midland
Park & Rec for
sponsoring the event.**



Geocaching with Canines Highlights

The first Geocaching with Canines event was fun for all. Ten caches were hidden throughout City Forest, and participants had two hours to find them. Each cache contained a prize. At the end of the event, Sydney Cluff drew the name of the winner for the grand prize of a global positioning system (GPS). And our winners were Sherry Hodges and dog Scout! Thanks again to our sponsors Park Place Homes, Coca Cola, and Journals Unlimited.



(left) Norma Kleinbriel, Joann Kleinbriel and Emma Priem with dogs Ranger and Skippy found the cache by the bridge.

(right) Our winners! Sherry Hodges and Scout.

(above right) Sydney Cluff draws the winning name.



Elections

We need you! Elections for the SOS Animal Rescue board will be held on November 21. The open positions are president, secretary, and one director. If you are interested in running for a position, please contact Dawn Carsten at dcarsten@dow.com.

The criteria for elected positions is listed in our bylaws:

Section 1. Membership into SOSAR will be open to the public. Annual membership dues shall be determined by the board. Dues must be paid in order to be a member in good standing and eligible to vote.

Section 2. All of the officers of the Board of Directors shall be members of SOSAR.

Section 3. All directors and officers shall have been members of SOSAR for six months prior to their election. No person convicted of cruelty to animals or who engages or has engaged in blood sports involving animals may be a director.

PAL PROGRAM

HARVEST FESTIVAL!

with hot dogs & sodas for sale plus crafts, Stuff the Truck, & more
Saturday, October 15 • 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
at Tractor Supply

PET HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST!

plus Stuff the Truck & crafts
Saturday, October 29 • 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
at Family Fare

WISH TREE DECORATING!

plus Stuff the Truck, crafts, & more
Sunday, November 20 • 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
at Family Fare

BUSIEST GROCERY DAY OF THE YEAR*!

*(*according to Family Fare Store Manager Paul Conn)*
Friday, December 23 • 2:00 – 7:00 p.m.
at Family Fare in the Lobby

Be watching for more information on a Bingo event and craft shows at Alpine throughout the winter.

THANK YOU!

In memory of Ron Andrews
by Harriette Miller

Coca-Cola
for donating 240 bottles of water for
Geocache & Dog Run

In memory of Jean Gandy
by Pamela & David Goodman

Abigail Hnizda & Elinor Hnizda
for lemonade stand proceeds

In Memory of Peaches
by John, Julie, & J.R. Nosal

Leslie Russell

In memory of Sake Schuster
by Jason, Heidi, & Bear Snell

Kaethe & Jeff Schuster

Haylee Snyder
who asked for donations
in lieu of birthday gifts

John & Penny Tabor

PLATINUM

Alpine Mobile Home Village

Family Fare

Morley's Portraiture

Park Place Homes

Midland VetMed

GOLD

Coca-Cola

The Home Depot

Northern Animal Clinic

Prime Lending

Soldan's

SILVER

Garber Automotive Group

The Gourmet Cupcake Shoppe

Larkin Food Center

PetSmart

Tractor Supply Company

BRONZE

Arnold Storage

Journals Unlimited

Kmart

Shelley's Bed & Biscuit

Target

WalMart

**United Way Donations: If you donate to United Way,
please consider writing in SOS Animal Rescue as your charity of choice.
Your donations will go towards helping animals in need. Thank you!**

Cat with Kittens Rescued from Auto Salvage Yard

In May 2011, SOS Animal Rescue volunteer Liz Shook noticed a pregnant stray cat wandering around her neighborhood and an auto salvage yard across the street. Liz was in the process of obtaining a live trap to catch the pregnant cat when the volunteer noticed she was too late—the cat had given birth at the auto salvage yard! Liz got the neighbors involved by keeping track of what area of the auto salvage yard the cat was coming and going from. After a few weeks, the area of search was somewhat pinpointed and the search was on. After about two hours, mom cat and her four kittens were located in the trunk of one of the junk cars. What a relief to all who were searching to find not only the kittens, but mom in the trunk too!

The cat and kittens were taken to the veterinarian the next day, and the veterinarian said the mom cat would not have survived after a few more weeks. She was weak and malnourished, and all of her energy and nourishment were going to the three-week-old kittens. If the mother cat died, these kittens would not have survived because the opening in and out of the trunk was up by the back window, much too tall for the kittens to leap up to and get out.

All of the kittens are beautiful, healthy, and affectionate and are purring machines. The mom cat, May, has been adopted along with kittens April, June Bug, July, and August. It is a truly rewarding experience to save a litter and place them in healthy, happy homes. Additional kittens are available for adoption. Please check our website for their complete biographies and our schedule for when kittens will be at our adopt-athons at the Midland PetSmart. If interested in adopting one of these kittens, please fill out an adoption application on our website.



Calling All Crafters!

Crafters, here's your chance to find out what crafts SOS Animal Rescue makes to raise money for the PAL Program. We will meet on Wednesday, October 5 at 6:00 p.m. at Alpine Mobile Home Village in the club house, located at 3601 Alpine Drive, Midland. Alpine MH Village is located off Sturgeon Road near Barstow Airport.

For volunteers who cook, wash, bake, sew, crochet, administrate, research on the computer, deliver food, have an inventory of food or craft materials, or love to use that glue gun, come on over to find out more information about SOS crafts and to have any questions answered. If you are unable to attend on this evening, please contact Lori Tubek at 989-708-1327 or ltubekstone@yahoo.com.

SOS EVENTS

Sunday, October 2

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-athon at PetSmart

Saturday, October 8

8:00 a.m.

Dirty Dog Trail Run at City Forest

Saturday, October 15

10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Stuff the Truck at Tractor Supply

Sunday, October 16

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-athon at PetSmart

Monday, October 17

6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

SOS Meeting at GAD Library Room B

Thursday, October 20

6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Downtown Pumpkin Festival

Saturday, October 29

11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Stuff the Truck at Family Fare

Sunday, November 6

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-athon at PetSmart

Sunday, November 20

11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Stuff the Truck at Family Fare

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-athon at PetSmart

Monday, November 21

6:30 – 7:30 p.m.

SOS Meeting at GAD Library Room B

Sunday, December 4

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-athon at PetSmart

Sunday, December 18

Noon – 3:00 p.m.

Adopt-athon at PetSmart

Friday, December 23

2:00 – 7:00 p.m.

Stuff the Truck at Family Fare

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

THANK YOU!

Thank You for Displaying SOS Donation Canisters!

Auto Technicians
B-Xtreme Cycle & Sport
Countryside Vet Clinic
Eastman Animal Clinic
Elvira's
HQ Bicycle
Larkin Food Store
Northern Animal Clinic
One Hour Cleaning
Service Express Cellular
Soldan's
Surrey Vet Clinic
Tractor Supply
Wall & Webb

The Good Life

by Chris Erskine

One of the many shoppers that attended the June SOS Animal Rescue PAL Program's rummage sale and ribbon-cutting ceremony was also one of the cutest. His name is Batty, an eight-year-old Weimaraner that was adopted by the Bickmore family through Great Lakes Weimaraner Rescue (GLWR) in Grand Haven, Michigan.

David and Teri Bickmore's daughter, Diana, had wanted a dog for a long while. When father, David, ran in the 2010 Dirty Dog Run, a Weimaraner puppy in the crowd caught his eyes, and they were able to talk awhile with the guardian. Upon doing more extensive research regarding the Weimaraner breed, they decided that it was definitely time for a dog, which made Diana very happy.

The Bickmores felt adopting an older Weimaraner would be the right thing to do. In their search, they located Batty who was in GLWR foster care. Batty had been found abandoned and emaciated when GLWR rescued him. Teri and David arranged to meet Batty in his foster home. Teri says that Batty "actually picked them," snuggling his snout calmly in the crook of her arm for 45 minutes while the foster caregiver and the Bickmores sat and discussed Batty's future. It was a done deal, so to speak.

Keeping the name given by the rescue, Batty enjoys the good life now. He is David's constant running companion as they take on the trails at Midland's City Forest or when the family bicycles. He never lacks for love and attention. The devotion this family has for Batty, the dog that had been previously thrown away, is quite touching.

Something to ponder: The Bickmores took the responsible road prior to adopting Batty by researching the temperament and physical traits specific to the breed they were interested in. They also considered puppy versus older dog. By doing so, they were able to adopt a dog that is a remarkable fit with their family's expectations and lifestyle. Considerable forethought should always be taken prior to adopting a pet and should never be done on a whim. All animals need exercise, and dogs must have those daily outdoor exercise/walks with you. Too often, they end up as permanent yard ornaments because it got too hard for the guardians. Dogs need to be gently trained, walked daily, and socialized in order to be happy and content. The animals that we commit to care for, no matter what species, always deserve more than just our good intentions.

Teri, Batty, and Diana.



Declawing Cats

SOS Animal Rescue encourages owners to seek alternatives to declawing their cats. If you are thinking about having your pet declawed, please take a moment to consider the following information.

Claws are Important to a Cat

A cat's remarkable grace and agility and its faultless sense of balance are due to a great extent to its retractable claws, which allow it to establish footing for walking, running, springing, climbing, or stretching. A cat's claws are also its best defense mechanism.

The Need to Scratch

When a cat scratches, it pulls off the old outer nail sheath and exposes sharp, smooth claws. Scratching is also a way of fulfilling the cat's strong instinctive need to mark its territory. Not only does a cat mark an object visibly by scratching it, but the scratching deposits secretions from glands in the feet that can be smelled by other cats. Scratching may also serve psychological and physiological needs by providing comfort and expression by kneading and allowing valuable stretching and foot-muscle exercise.

Declawing Operation

The standard declawing procedure calls for the removal of the claw, and the last bone of the toe. The operation is usually performed on the front feet. It is actually an amputation comparable to the removal of the fingers of the human hand at the last knuckle. The cat experiences considerable pain in the recovery and healing process.

The Risks

Medical: As with any surgical procedure that requires general anesthesia there are risks. Complications from anesthesia and/or the surgical procedure are possible. The use of advanced anesthetics, proper monitoring of the anesthetized patient and surgery performed by a qualified veterinarian should limit the risks substantially.

Behavioral: Although no definitive studies have been conducted on the effects of declawing, owners and veterinarians have noticed personality changes in some declawed cats. Formerly lively, friendly animals have become withdrawn and introverted. Others, deprived of their primary form of defense, become nervous, fearful, and/or aggressive, often using their only remaining defense, their teeth. The constant state of stress caused by a feeling of defenselessness may make some declawed cats more prone to disease or to inappropriate elimination outside the litterbox.

Safety: A declawed cat must never be allowed outdoors; its ability to defend itself or escape from danger has been seriously impaired. Even indoors, a cat without claws faces

dangers. One physical effect of declawing is a gradual weakening of the muscles of the legs, shoulders and back; balance is impaired. This, combined with the fact that despite its grace, a cat's surefootedness depends on its ability to grasp quickly with its claws, means that a declawed animal can more easily be injured in a fall.

Instead of Declawing

Introduce a scratching post. Buy or make a scratching post that is tall enough so the cat can stretch completely when scratching, and stable enough so it won't wobble when being used. It should be covered with a heavy, rough fiber like sisal or the back side of carpeting. Place the post in an accessible area. If you are trying to discourage the cat from scratching a particular piece of furniture, try placing the post in front of it, gradually moving the post aside as the cat begins to use it regularly.

Train with a dual approach: discourage the cat from clawing the wrong things, encourage the cat to claw the right things. If the cat begins to scratch the furniture, call him by name, firmly telling him "no", and entice him over to the scratching post with a ribbon or fresh catnip. Each time he goes on his own, praise him, pet him, and spend a minute playing at the post. Make it a fun place to be. At the same time, the favorite furniture scratching area can be made less attractive by contact paper sticky side out (held on with upholstery screws). Put inexpensive cardboard scratch pads or posts near all the cat's favorite furniture.

Keep the cat's nails trimmed. Cutting the nails regularly may help a cat from scratching the furniture, or at least reduce the damage done by his scratching. Get your kitten used to having his nails clipped while he's young. With an older cat, it may help to begin by handling the cat's feet under pleasurable circumstances. Then begin to introduce the clipping procedure by approaching the cat while he's relaxed or even napping and clip only a few nails per session. Praise your cat while you clip the nail and reward him with a treat.

If you're in doubt about what the proper nail length looks like, have your veterinarian trim the nails once. The only equipment necessary is a good pair of feline nail scissors. Before cutting, look for the pink "quick" that runs down the center of the nail. The scissors should cut about an eighth of an inch forward of the quick. Be extremely careful not to cut into the quick. If this happens, the cat will experience pain, and bleeding is likely. The bleeding may stop without assistance, or you may need to hold a soft cloth on the nail or apply a little styptic powder. If you trim a small amount of nail on a regular basis, the quick will actually tend to recede.

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Is your cat scratching you? It is not uncommon to get scratched by your kitten or adolescent cat. It is during these growth stages that predatory play is at its highest. To avoid being seen as “prey” by your cat, direct play onto such interactive toys as a catnip mouse on a string or commercially available toys like the Cat Dancer or Kitty Tease. If your cat is still pouncing on fingers and toes, reprimand it with a loud open-mouthed hiss or a puff of air blown in the face.

The ASPCA hopes that you will give careful consideration to the decision to declaw or not to declaw your cat. It is a painful procedure that can have serious physical and behavioral consequences for your pet. If you have questions about declawing or about training your cat, don't hesitate to call us. We'll do our best to help you establish and maintain a happy relationship with your feline friend, while keeping both your furnishings and your pet in one piece.

Reprinted from *Petfinder.com*. Revised by the ASPCA's Companion Animal Services Department.





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Officers

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Darlene Andrews, Secretary
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Mission Statement

SOS Animal Rescue is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to reduce the number of unwanted pets in the Midland area through placement, public education, spay/neuter assistance programs, and support for the efforts of local animal welfare groups.

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