



Newsletter

What's New, Pussycat?

October 2019



Libby with her knitted helmet

“If it Weren’t for Cat’s Cradle”: Saving Little Libby from Certain Death

While most cats come to Cat’s Cradle in relatively good shape, there are many who have extraordinary medical needs. You might remember Keaton whose story we shared with you last year. He had a throat stricture caused by a congenital defect, which necessitated a costly surgery. Without blinking an eye, the Cat’s Cradle community geared up, raised funds, and saved his life. And once again, because of our network of big-hearted people, we were able to save a little kitten named Liberty.

Imagine: it’s late July, and you’re working at Cat’s Cradle’s Downtown Center. You pick up the phone and hear the voice of a distressed Page County business owner who found 3 abandoned kittens in the bushes behind her store. Because all the area vet offices were closed, she turned to Cat’s Cradle for help. Heartbreakingly, she said one of the kittens was already dead, and the other two were barely clinging to life.



Through reaching out to our network of fosters, we were able to contact someone who lives in Luray, and they were able to rush over and see what could be done. Another heartbreak: by the time the foster arrived to check on the two other kitties, one had died, and the other, only about 3 weeks old, was very lethargic. While we do not normally do public intake, this was an emergency, and the cat was taken into our foster care system.

We wish the story could have progressed smoothly from here, but Liberty, also known as Libby, had much suffering in store. The next day, Libby began to have seizures and her head began swelling, so she was taken to the vet’s office. The vet said an abscess had formed because of trauma to her head, and we suspect the injuries came from being thrown from a

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Saving Little Libby - continued...

car. They gave Libby a thorough work-up, and while performing an ultrasound on her head, the vet discovered a skull fracture. After the evaluation, she was sent back home with medicine to help her recover. What a painful life this young kitty had already endured, and incredibly, her tribulations weren't over.

Soon thereafter, the abscess ruptured which necessitated another trip to the vet, stitches to patch her up, and antibiotics to help everything heal. If there is a silver lining in the epoch of Libby's young life, it's that after the abscess burst, the pressure on her head diminished, making the seizures stop. But there was another setback after all the trauma she had endured: she had become blind.

After these early dark days, there were signs of light. The antibiotics she was prescribed began to work, and she even started to run around and play a little. Concerned about her fragile head, one of our wonderful volunteers crocheted a cute little helmet for her to wear.

After nearly losing her life, the care Libby received from the vet, her foster, and others set her on a positive path. Today, her skull has healed, and she has grown to be a happy, playful kitten. While she still suffers from impaired vision, that hasn't stopped her from thriving.



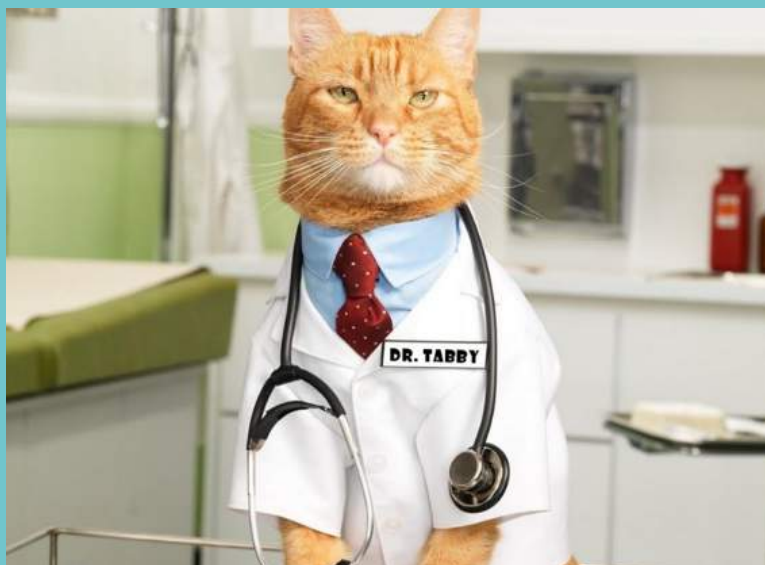
Libby after lots of love and healing.

Like in the case of our friend Keaton, if it weren't for Cat's Cradle, little Libby would not have survived, and it's a testament to the generosity and selflessness of everyone in our organization.

There have been so many times over the years where the odds were stacked against the kitties with severe injuries or conditions, but Cat's Cradle does everything we can to save these precious lives. We truly could not do everything we do without your support. Thank you for helping us give so many kitties healthy and happy lives!



Would you like to save kittens like little Libby? It is so easy to save lives ALL year round! Visit www.catscradleva.org and you can sign up to become a Pet Pal. Simply choose recurring billing and we will charge your credit card monthly for the amount that you choose. You can cancel, increase or decrease your donation at anytime. Our Pet Pals receive all our newsletters and a special holiday thank you gift, along with a year end summary of donations for tax purposes. We hope you join our wonderful family of Pet Pals...don't delay, sign up today!



Dear Tabby

What's new, pussy cats? My name is Dr. Tabby, M.D. (Meow Doctor), and Cat's Cradle has once again asked that I answer some of your fur-midable cat care questions. I set aside time in my arduous sleeping schedule to give you some tips. Let us begin!

“Dear Tabby, what can I do about my male cat spraying around the house?”

-Agitated in Augusta

Dear Agitated, I'm not ashamed to admit that I, too, was once a sprayer. (Don't let my white coat and professionalism fool you!) I would suggest getting your cat neutered as that will stop the hormones that make your little man spray. If neutering doesn't solve the issue, you should then talk to a behavioralist; there might be issues giving your cat grief which can bring about spraying. If you can work on behavior problems soon after they start, there's a good chance you can fix them with ease!

“Dear Tabby, I'm thinking about getting another cat. What factors should I consider, and how should I introduce them?”

-Family Grower in Shenandoah

Dear Family Grower, it's wonderful to hear that you want a playmate for your current cat. Those yarn balls can get sooo boring. As you set out to find the next member of your family, you'll want to think about age, gender, and temperament. You should also get advice from your vet about what types of cat might suit your current one.

Before introducing your new kitty, keep the two in separate spaces, and try to find a spot where they can still hear and smell each other. This helps begin the introduction process. After a couple days, swap the cats, putting them where the other was so they can get used to the other's scent even more. Then, let them see each other but with minimal contact (use a friend to help or a barrier like a child gate to keep them separate). After a few days of that, they should finally be ready to interact!



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Dear Tabby - continued...

“Dear Tabby, what are the signs that my cat might need to see a dentist?”

-Cat Mom in Mount Crawford



Dear Cat Mom, if your kitty's pearly whites aren't so pearly anymore (like yellow or brown) or you see tartar or plaque, it's probably time to have those chompers cleaned. And if there are other issues like a persistent foul odor or a raised red line above the teeth, that might indicate gingivitis, so have that furry friend's mouth checked out. I hope that's some advice you can sink your teeth into.

Well, my friends, I just saw a bird outside my window, and that means I need to go give it a death stare for about 20 minutes. As always, it was a pleasure chattering with you. Until next time!

Information adapted from catcare.com/faq.htm

HOW YOU ARE MAKING A LIFESAVING DIFFERENCE IN 2019!



- Adoptions (through July): 265
- Transports to No-Kill Partners (through July): 101
- Spay/Neuter Surgeries (through May): 837
- Medical Assistance Clients Helped (through May): 74



SUMMERTIME CHALLENGE 2019 WAS A BLOCKBUSTER HIT!!!

Thanks to our amazing, generous supporters!!! You have done it yet again - - we exceeded our \$50,000 goal and obtained \$50,000 in matching funds from our wonderful, anonymous donor. Your contributions totaled \$52,738.21 - - **MEWOW!!!!!!** This Summertime Challenge, our single largest annual fundraiser, is critical to help support all of our programs. We can't do it without you - - and you stepped up in a big way. We are grateful for all donations in every amount, and we want to especially recognize our Challenge Sponsors in the giving categories below.

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Volunteer Spotlight - The PetSmart Crew!

Cat's Cradle is very fortunate to partner with our local PetSmart stores, particularly those in Harrisonburg and Waynesboro. You can find our AWESOME adoption counselors onsite at both locations every Saturday giving their all to find "purrfect" adopters for our adorable foster cats and kittens. But just as it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a big group of loyal volunteers seven days a week to care for our foster cats and kittens who are in residence at the Harrisonburg PetSmart. Cleaning, socializing, feeding, weighing – it's nonstop! We thank each and every PetSmart volunteer, but wanted to recognize a couple who have been rock stars in going above and beyond.

Betsy Bolton

Why Cat's Cradle?

I have always had a love and passion for all animals, so I decided to change my work shift to have more time during the day to volunteer. Renee Clark connected me with Cat's Cradle and now I wouldn't trade my days spending time with the cats for anything in the world! Cat's Cradle has a great group of volunteers who always work together, putting the well-being of the cats and kittens first. I truly love being part of such a compassionate and caring group of people.

What makes Cat's Cradle special?

I love the mission of Cat's Cradle - - to ensure and maintain a safe, compassionate community for cats by reducing shelter intake by spay/neuter, rescue/foster/adoption/transport, and pet retention programs. All of these programs work together to make a big difference!

I easily get attached to the cats, so on my days to spend time with them it's hard for me when it's time to go!



Gina Troyer



Why Cat's Cradle?

Almost two years ago, I became interested in helping Cat's Cradle as a way to involve my students at Turner Ashby in learning about animal care and having compassion towards all animals. I was teaching high school students with special needs and was responsible for community-based instruction and helping our kids learn about work skills. What better way to do that than to combine my job and my passion for animal rescue by having my students volunteer for Cat's Cradle at PetSmart?

We signed up for a weekly morning cleaning shift and it became my favorite day of the week. It was difficult having certain kids help with the cleaning of the cubes due to their mobility issues, but they could always spend their time playing with the cats. We also started washing the laundry as this was a great way to incorporate independent living skills into our daily routine (sorting and washing laundry, using a washing machine, folding, etc.). The kids were learning so many skills while helping the cats! It was a win-win for everyone.

My work schedule and position has changed this year and I am no longer able to commit to a weekly cleaning shift, but I still take home the laundry each week and fill in for shifts whenever I can.

What makes Cat's Cradle special?

Cat's Cradle is a great organization and everyone has been awesome to work with. Every single volunteer has such a loving heart and it truly takes a village in animal rescue to be effective and save as many lives as possible. Cat's Cradle is the perfect example of a well-run, organized group of animal advocates who comprise a village that I am extremely proud to be a part of.



Hermi

Is there one cat you particularly remember?

Hermi. Poor girl – her owner died and Cat's Cradle rescued her. When she came to PetSmart, she came with a pair of her owner's sweatpants, which we folded up and placed in her condo. What a sad story. She was there for several weeks. While I was cleaning one morning a wonderful guy came by to look at the cats. He had seen Hermi the day before and came back specifically to see her again. He spent some time with her but said he needed his girlfriend to meet her. I offered to come back that evening if they wanted to come see her again and they did. It was love at first sight for his girlfriend and Hermi and they adopted her shortly after. Timing is everything and I felt I was at the right place at the right time to help Hermi find her forever home!



Amy Setzer (Volunteer Coordinator at the time this article was written) praised these two rock star volunteers, and all the PetSmart volunteers, for their key role in helping Cat's Cradle foster cats and kittens find their furrever homes. "Without all our PetSmart volunteers, we would not be able to keep our PetSmart adoption center, and our adoptable cats and kittens, in tip top shape. The couple of hours our volunteers each spend on a given day at PetSmart means the cats and Cat's Cradle are accessible to potential adopters, which increases our adoption numbers and our overall exposure within the community. With more adoptions, we can the rescue more cats and kittens from area shelters to help reduce their euthanasia rates. And it's fun to play with cats and kittens!"



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2019 COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA CAMPAIGN (CVC)

Calling all state employees! Now's your chance to help Cat's Cradle by signing up to make your donation through payroll deduction. The campaign runs October through December - - check it out at www.cvc.virginia.gov. Cat's Cradle's charity code is 00-003593. THANKS!



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