



At the Scratching Post



Volume # 2, Date: October 2023

Hi all!

As everyone in the animal rescue and shelter world knows we are in the midst of a serious crisis. Rescues and shelters are overflowing and the lack of adoptions and the scarcity of donations and funding are making it impossible for some rescues and shelters to survive much longer. We are all in the same struggle competing for the few donation and funding dollars out there just trying to make ends meet. Vet bills and food costs have gone through the roof making the gap even wider. At WKNR we still have 60 kittens in our care which should never be at this time of the year. This is the result of the post covid lockdown dumping and abandonment of our beloved pets that some deem disposable. As they continue to mature in our care, they will need to be completely vetted, fed and housed as they grow older and less adoptable. We have calculated that cost of one kitten from when they arrive to when they are adopted out now tops \$800 per kitten. We have had to change our food program to decrease this cost to endure this crisis. We have food donations coming in that get us by for a few more weeks at a time, however, this crisis may take years to recover from and we hope to get government help soon. Thank you to everyone helping us through these unprecedented times. We truly can only do this with your help!

Cathy & Harold

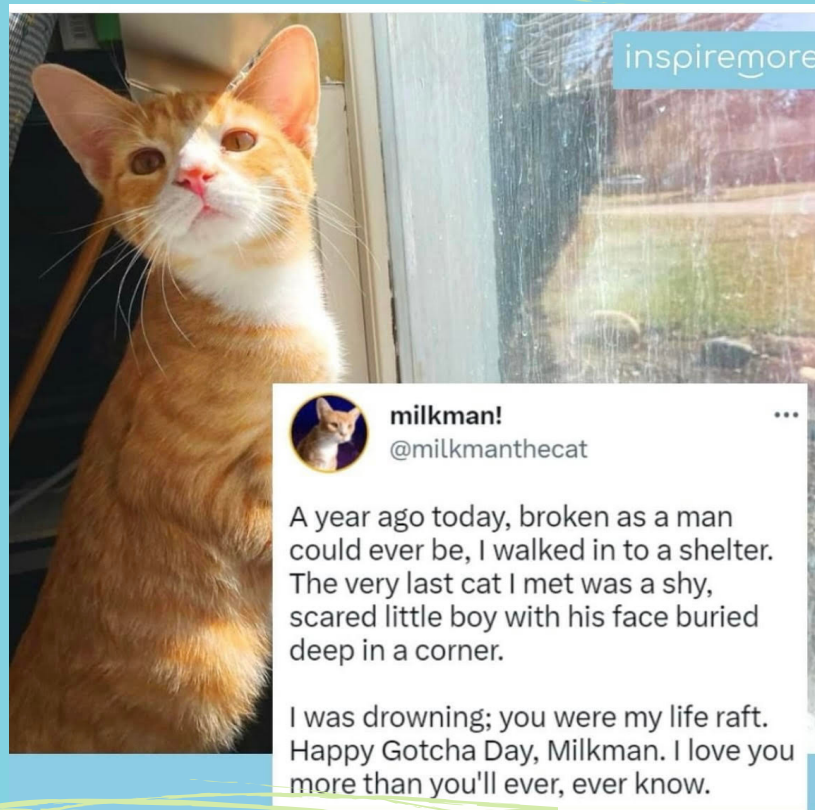
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Please Note: Prices & information in this newsletter are accurate as of the time of the publishing date and are subject to change without notice



Our Board of Directors & Coordinators Grows Stronger!

Directors

Cathy Black (retired CPA) - President/Program Director

Linda Arnold-Taylor - Secretary/Admin Director

Randi Young (RVT) - Medical Director/Nursery Advisor

Anu Sharma - Treasurer/Director of Finance

Julia Linares-Roake - Funding Director (Doctoral Student)

Chantelle Stringle - Director of Community Programs

Coordinators

Jayne Skanes - Volunteer / Training Coordinator

Adoption Coordinator - Cathy Black - Acting

Foster Coordinator - Cathy Black - Acting

Community Program Coordinator - Chantelle Stringle

Funding Coordinator - Julia Linares-Roake

Fundraising Coordinator - Kelly-Ann Lauzon-Stringle

Donation/Bookkeeping Coordinator - Anu Sharma

Gatekeeper - Roxanne Jasan

FUNDRAISERS 23

KELLY-ANN



We recently welcomed Kelly-Ann Lauzon-Stringle to the team as our Fundraising Coordinator. Kelly-Ann brings a great love for animals and lots of fundraising ideas! From Cruise Nights through the summer in Ingersoll, to bottle drives, our ultra popular Calendar, trivia at Upper Thames Brewing Company, to Yard Sales (with Krispy Kremes on top), we are always coming up with new ways to keep our Mommas and babies happy and healthy!



Upcoming Events

November: Christmas Planter Workshop

November: On-Line Auction

December 2: Countdown to Christmas Bazaar (Oxford Auditorium, Woodstock)



THANK YOU

A huge thank you to all who have supported us: by coming to our events, sharing our fundraisers and making us your charity of choice for birthday fundraisers on social media!

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

LINDA TAYLOR

Our directors are the "next level" volunteers that keep our ship sailing! They've taken the challenge of not only the daily care for our mommas and babies and showing up for numerous events throughout the year, but they're working behind the scenes to promote our mission in the community (especially at the government level), appealing for fundraising, donations and grants, and guiding our volunteers. Without their unwavering commitment, our programs wouldn't be the successes they are!

This issue introduces you to Linda Taylor, Secretary-Admin Director.

Linda joined the nursery as one of its original volunteers in 2020, and she remembers a time when it was just her, Cathy, a few Mommas and babies, and lots of plans! That smaller (but important) role soon blossomed into taking on the challenge as one of our directors.

Linda says, "I retired at the end of 2019 and then COVID hit! I was looking for a way to "give back" in a volunteer capacity and to put my many years of experience in health care to work. I saw Cathy's Facebook ad looking for help in the nursery as it was just being built in the basement of her home and I was one of the first volunteers to apply. In the early days it was quite quiet. Cathy and I had lots of time together and there were many shifts when I was the only volunteer in the nursery."



Linda with founder Cathy Black

"Although not my intention when I joined the nursery, I have fostered twice and loved the experience so much that I adopted kittens from each experience and now have 6 felines in my home. It is so rewarding to watch these tiny babies who are helpless at birth and rely on us or their momma for everything. Personally I do get attached and every year there are a couple of special kittens that steal our hearts and make for difficult goodbyes when they are adopted, even though we all acknowledge that this is the end goal.

I have learned so much from Cathy and appreciate that we are encouraged to continue to learn. I have watched her and Harold work endlessly to realize their dream. Along with them I am excited for the future and look forward to a time when we can build a stand-alone nursery."

From Cathy and Harold:

"Speaking with her you know she is truly a cat lover. Every time she touches a kitten she glows brighter and it is a true pleasure to witness. We have been through some very tough times over the past couple of years and she has always stood by us and helped us pull through the really rough spots and I can't imagine the nursery without her."



Linda and Walt

"Walt, Linda's husband, has become a true blessing here as well. He takes care of the property with the same love and attention as his partner Linda looks after the kittens and momma cats in the nursery. Walt also runs mini bottle drives monthly in Dorchester.

Linda has always been my rock and I turn to her when I am truly feeling exhausted or ready to give up. She is there with kind, soothing words and always has my back. We are very much like minded when comes to feline care which makes it a great fit. Linda has now become a Director and integral part of our mission.

We are so blessed to have both Linda and Walt with us on this incredible journey!"

Cathy & Harold



WKNR IN THE COMMUNITY

Paws & Whiskers

This September we launched the first "Paws & Whiskers: A Community Program" with great success! As our community program coordinator Chantelle says, "the workshop provides a safe and welcoming space where isolated members of our community can come out and make friends and enjoy the company of our emissary cats and kittens. We hope to offer the workshop again in January for a small cost, so keep your eyes peeled for some kitten fun!"



Little Mr. Heartbreaker Vinny!



Ready for the Cat Show!

Woodstock Cat Show October 1, 2023

A great time was had by all, resulting in three adoptions and lots of positive interaction and feedback from the community. Many thanks to our WKNR volunteers who came together to set up a large display of Cats, Kittens and Merch, plus we received many donations of food throughout the day! We were the only rescue invited to attend, with a special thanks to organizer Heather Sheridan and Jesse, Alana & Danielle who manned the door and then donated their pays back to the nursery! ❤️

Facebook Live!



Time/kittens permitting, we will be "broadcasting live" on Facebook, with our regular hosts Angela and Chantelle, doing unboxings of Amazon donations from our amazing supporters. Tune in Tuesdays at 8/8:30pm!

We are also occasionally doing Facebook live tours of the nursery, and introductions to our many adorable potential adoptees.

TELL YOUR FRIENDS!

*"When a man loves cats,
I am his friend and comrade,
without further introduction."
- Mark Twain*





OUR FERAL COLONY AND TNVR PROGRAM

Due to the exploding population of feral and stray cats, especially in rural areas, we are expanding our TNVR* program.

Right now in Oxford County and beyond there are many colonies struggling to get a handle on the exploding cat populations they care for...not by choice but because of their love for animals in need when nobody else is there or willing to help.

We are currently working with a large colony in Burgessville of approximately 14 adults and 17 kittens to stop the cycle on this population. The total known population of this colony is 31 felines.

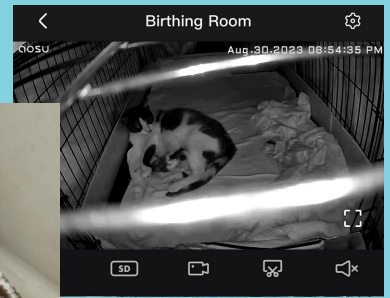
Jayme, One of our coordinators, knows this story too well, as the Burgessville colony is in her back yard! here is Jayme's story: Over the span of the 17 years that Jayme's boyfriend's family has lived in this area, they have seen a population of stray cats grow due to the sad and alarming amount of animals abandoned by irresponsible neighbours, culminating in about 3 generations of feral cats. One case was caused by a neighbour passing away and her children releasing her 4 unaltered females. Other neighbours have unfortunately come and gone, leaving behind their cats as well. In one case, neighbours left behind 2 female cats and a husky, who luckily was taken in by this caring family, and although this sweet dog passed away after a year in their care, they did everything they could for her and gave her more love in her last year than she'd ever received in past.

Jayme said, "Some cats strictly stay out and in the barn and several come in and out of the house. They were part of a TNR program, however due to Covid, the program they were in was on hold and is now back logged which has left the property with about 15 (not including kittens) cats all infected with URI (Upper respiratory infection) among other diseases. As of recently we've had multiple litters, leaving about 15 kittens, 10 of which I've been able to keep separated from the adults and properly cared for in a more sanitary environment. I would love the cats to get vetted and cared for as so many of them would make amazing pets if given the chance".



Jayme loading 8 members of the colony for transport to EVAN for spay/neuter

Felicity (aka Rosalind), part of the Burgessville colony, was brought to WKVR as a very pregnant feral girl. After a long labour, she delivered two babies, only one of who survived, little Miss Fancy. Once Fancy is weaned and adopted, Felicity will be spayed and will have a loving home with Jayme where after too many years, she will never have to spend another cold or unfriendly night outside ever again.



Felicity and Babe!



Fancy

*TNVR: Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Release

IN THEIR WORDS: THE VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE



I so enjoy the interaction with fellow cat lovers, and I'm forever entertained by the antics of these cats and kittens! The work can be challenging and sometimes heartbreaking, but incredibly rewarding. I told Cathy when I applied to volunteer that I needed a purpose. I have absolutely found it at WKNR!
- Ginger Taylor, volunteer

It began as a way for my son to earn volunteer hours for school but became so much more! The level of compassion for the kittens & their moms is incredible, but more incredible is that we get to be part of it. We see the kittens grow from birth to adoption, we get to play with them, feed them and clean them. We get to feel their love through their purrs, snuggles and leaping into our arms! It's the most rewarding experience ever!
- Miranda Regan-Rowntree, volunteer

"When I first started my summer job at the nursery, I knew that with the nature of the job I may have to deal with the loss of a kitten. I wasn't sure how I would react to that, and I thought it may make me want to quit, or throw me into a depression. When it happened on only my fourth day I was shocked, but what Cathy said to me rang so true; "for every one we lose, look how many we're helping." I love all the kittens, and to see them heal, grow, and get adopted; to know I helped make that happen. I've grown to love them all so much that when summer ended, I didn't last two weeks before I was back as a volunteer! I missed it so much. I'd like to say "thank you" to Cathy and all my fellow volunteers who keep the nursery going, to the fosters and adopters who give the kittens a good home (and send updates just as I'm missing the kittens most!), and to the kittens and cats themselves, who give me such joy and hope!" - Ashley Burke, volunteer

"You're the first person to see that cats are in fact ridiculous. They're silly, and cuddly. And lonely. And frightened, and brave. Like us."
- Emily Richardson Wain
(The Electrical Life of Louis Wain)



Gorgeous Georgia!

The Adoption Experience -By Donor Danica Huber



WKNR is undoubtedly second-to-none in all facets of Momma & Kitten care. From Cathy and her volunteers' attentiveness to incoming kittens and cats, their health statuses and the immediate care required by all felines at intake, to the cats' daily care, stimulation needs and veterinarian care.

Oct 1st, I attended a cat show at the Woodstock Fairgrounds. Here is where I fell in love with my new kitten, Zackina! The following weekend, Zackie came to my home!!

On adoption day, an AMAZING & heavenly treat awaited me, and not at all what I expected: when I visited Cathy at her WKNR facility for my kitty's adoption day, I found an epic heaven for any cat loving tooman indeed! Not only did I again experience Cathy's (and her staff's) professionalism and attentiveness to the felines, but I observed and experienced nothing like what I could have imagined in such a well ran facility!

I was shown the "Gen Pop" area of cats, all chillin', social, approachable (my spouse had 5 kitties at one time getting loves!) and not an ounce of odd behavior among so many cats was honestly, a heaven on Earth! It was remarkable how socialized the cats were, healthy, playful, relaxed and the best was: they were actually watching videos made for cats!! I felt so honoured to be in their presence as these cattos were loving life and easily welcomed a new guest into their environment. I feel each and every one of the cats would be excellent adoption choices!

I got to visit my Zackina's Mama & reveled in the care all the mama cats were providing to the wee babies and again, thriving in clean, warm and cozy environments. I viewed the treatment room, equipped with incubators and honestly, resembled a veterinarian's practice! To care for abandoned kitties, WKNR is armed with what is immediately required for the care & treatment of the most vulnerable; in fact, I was able to witness "Irving" come home from the vet's and again, Cathy's attentiveness to this little one's needs was nothing short of what I anticipated, given her dedication to Irving's care since he arrived to WKNR.

The adoption process for my Zackina was seamless, all pertinent documents included with details pertaining to her spay with a date already booked. Cathy spent time going through the details with me as we viewed Zackina's Health Record. Despite I could imagine just how busy Cathy and her team are from hour to hour, day to day, I was grateful to have been provided a tour before taking my baby home and at no point in time did I feel rushed.

I feel absolute bliss to have a WKNR kitten! I am a multi-cat owner with one rescue I took in a few years ago thus a kitten was the option for our home, especially to introduce to my numerous adult cats. I kid you not: it took only 24 hours for Zackina to become comfortable in our home and by the end of the week, she was running all over our 2-storey home!

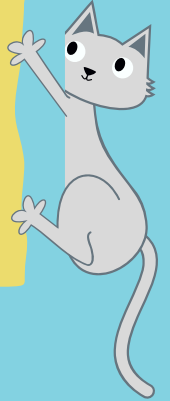
For any household considering adopting an adult or even a senior cat from WKNR, I encourage it 100%. I continue to be a proud monthly donor and looking forward to purchasing some Christmas items (LOVE the mugs!) and yes, I'll keep visiting WKNR on Facebook for new cats & kittens arriving into the facility; you never know what the future holds for another welcome into my home.



Zackie in her Forever Home!

2023 SO FAR...

October, 2023: over 60 cats and kittens still in our care



**INTAKES ARE UP 93%
FROM LAST YEAR!**

**Our volunteer numbers
continue to grow! We are now
50 strong!**



**Adoptions for 2023 are down
per capita**



Sweet Coraline

*Strong relationships continue to
develop and grow through local
business sponsors and partnerships*



OUR SUPPORTERS

Without the generous and consistent support of our sponsors and allies, we couldn't continue to do all that we can for these Mommas and kittens.

From the bottom of our human and feline hearts,
THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

In no order and with all of our hearts and gratitude, we thank:

♥ Miss Dixies Foundation - Kitchener

♥ Global Pet Foods - Woodstock

♥ Pet Valu - Woodstock

♥ Home Hardware - Ingersoll

♥ Royal Canin - Canada

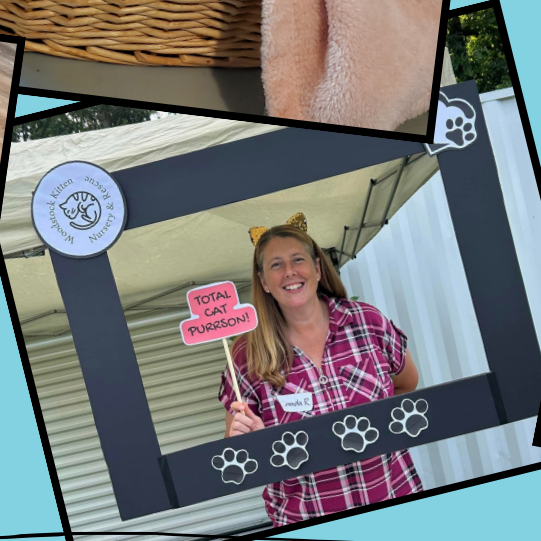
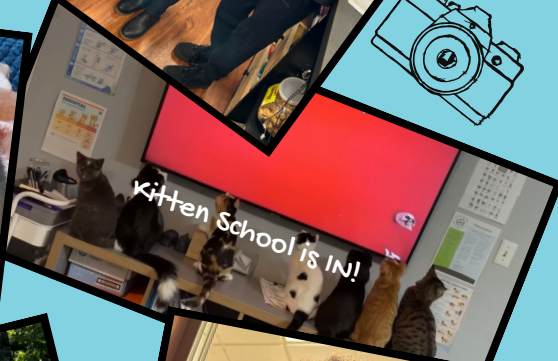
♥ Upper Thames Brewing Company - Woodstock



Harry mural created
by local artist
Mike Scheltema ♥

"How we behave
toward cats here below
determines our status in
heaven." — Robert A.
Heinlein

CAPTURING MOMENTS AT WKNR!



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