

CAT TALES

Issue 3

December 2008

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Mission Statement

C.A.R.E.S.' mission is to rescue shelter and find loving homes for stray, abandoned and unwanted cats.

SIMON SAYS... "FEED YOUR CAT RIGHT!"

In April 2008, a message was left on the CARES line by a woman pleading for financial aid to help her 2 year old cat Simon. Simon was at the Surrey Animal Hospital and was going to die if he wasn't treated quickly. Simon's urinary tract was completely blocked by crystals and his bladder was full and nearly bursting. Simon's owner, a single mom, did not have the funds to pay for the life saving treatment.

It is not regular practice for CARES to donate funds to assist with vet bills as the shelter spends some \$5000.00 plus per month in vet care for its own inhabitants. The shelter does assist (as funds allow) people who can't afford to spay or neuter their cat.

It seemed a shame that such a beautiful young cat should lose his life over something that could be treated. It bothered me so much that I picked up the phone and started calling people to "pass the hat around" and collect money to help poor Simon. Within a few hours, we raised over \$800.00 in personal (and CARES pitched in too) pledges! I called the vet's office and informed them of the money raised and the vet in turn offered charitable rates for Simon's care.



Simon's treatment began. A catheter was inserted, an IV was hooked up, and medications were administered. It took three weeks, but finally Simon became unblocked and was able to go back home to his family.

Regrettably, just two weeks after Simon went home, his owner noticed him straining and crying as he stood in the litter box. CARES received a call, and this time Simon was brought to the CARES' vet and his owner sadly surrendered him to us as she felt she could not continue with his care.

Treatment began again to unblock poor Simon....another catheter, another IV, and more medication. Two weeks later, a much happier and more comfortable Simon was sent back to the shelter with antibiotics and special diet instructions. Simon was monitored closely and as time went on, it appeared that this time he would stay unblocked.

So what was the cause of such a serious blockage for such a young cat like Simon? The culprit was a steady diet (for 2 years) of Whiskas brand kibbles. Food brands such as Whiskas, Friskies and Meow Mix (in kibble form) are notorious for causing urinary tract problems, especially in male cats. Feeding cats brands like this is almost like people living on a steady diet of junk food. The nutritional value is poor and eventually it will reek havoc on your health. (See article "What Should I Feed My Cat?" in this newsletter.

Not too long after Simon's full recovery, a nice couple came to the shelter to look at cats. One of their female cats (adopted from CARES) had recently passed away from diabetes and they wanted to find a nice cat who would be good company for their remaining cat.

Simon was the one! An email received by CARES shortly after Simon's adoption confirmed it. Simon's new mom wrote:

"Simon did not make strange at all. He checked out the house the minute we brought him home & joined us in the family room for the rest of the evening.

At the suggestion of you and our vet we are keeping him on a steady diet of good quality food.....Hills C/D and he seems to like it, but he just loves his wet food too!



Simon seems to love it here. He gets on very well with Abbey & they chase each other up & down the hall. He has taken over the 6' cat tree, sometimes on top or in either of the 2 houses. He enjoys flopping wherever he feels like it. He was the perfect choice!

Thanks so much for helping us to bring Simon home."

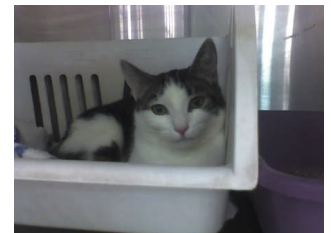
Yours truly,
Brenda Scammell

Submitted By:
Lauralee Porter
Adoptions Coordinator

C.A.R.E.S. SHELTER STATISTICS

Adoptions 2008

January	41	June	30
February	36	July	26
March	32	August	45
April	19	September	42
May	37	October	50



Neuters and Spays

May through August

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FUNDRAISING AND EVENTS

By Carol Briner, Treasurer

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

We on the fundraising committee continue to raise funds to fulfill the C.A.R.E.S' mission, which is to rescue, shelter, and find loving homes for stray, abandoned and unwanted cats.

WHAT WE HAVE BEEN DOING

On September 14th, we held our annual Walkathon at Derby Reach Park. It was a beautiful sunny day and the walkers were out in full force. This year we raised a stunning \$ 12,000!

Special thanks go to the volunteers who work hard preparing for this major event and also to this year's high pledge raisers: Lauralee Porter, Ginette Bourdeau, and Lawana Quest .

In October, we held our first pub night at the Clover Station Pub. Although there were a few technical difficulties (ie: not able to use the PA system to announce the door prizes), we still raised over \$2000.00 and fun was had by all!

We continue to do weekly meat draws at the Duke of Wellington Neighbourhood Pub and the Fort Neighbourhood Pub. The draws have been very successful and the volunteers have met many supportive people at these events. If you would like to help on a meat draw, please call Donna at 604-308-5992.

WHAT'S COMING UP

Pet Photos with Santa will be held for the 1st 3 weekends in December. Come by the Langley Petsmart store between 11am and 4pm and bring your favorite pet and have its photo taken with Santa! Proceeds from this event help the homeless cats at the CARES shelter



** The fundraising team would also like to thank the staff and management of Choices Market in South Surrey. People take their recyclable bottles and cans there and designate CARES to be the recipient of the funds. So far in 2008, \$500.00 has been raised for the shelter through Choices. We owe a special thanks to Ann Moser for collecting such a large portion of them! **

What Should I Feed My Cat?

We have all heard the old saying "You are what you eat", which is the notion that in order to be fit and healthy, you need to eat good food. This saying is equally true for your cat who depends on you for his daily meals. Choosing to spend the money to feed your cat the proper diet can either eliminate or delay veterinary expenses for a number of serious medical conditions.

Unlike humans, dogs, and other mammals, cats are obligate (true) carnivores. Their bodies are best suited for digesting animal proteins. They are unable to utilize dietary fiber, nor will they thrive on vegetarian diets.

To put it in a nutshell cats' basic nutritional needs are as follows:

- Protein from a meat, fish, or poultry source
- Taurine, an essential amino acid (found only in animals, poultry & fish)
- Various other vitamins, minerals, enzymes, and fatty acids
- Water

Cats do not need carbohydrates, of which several such as corn, wheat, and rice are used as fillers for both canned and dry foods. Other ingredients such as flavouring and colouring (which are not good for kitty) are also added by the manufacturers to make the food look appealing to the consumer.

So with all the foods out there on the shelves for sale, how do you know what to buy?

Here are a few tips to help with the task:

- **Buy Premium dry foods only.** You will know them as they will be more expensive than the cheap / generic brands, but they are worth it! The quality of your cat's diet is reflected **directly** in the price you pay for the food. Premium foods typically contain higher quality ingredients such as **real meat** rather than by-products. On the label, look for a named protein source such as chicken / lamb / beef rather than "meat" or "meat by-products". Generally (especially on cans), the protein source should be the first listed ingredient. Brands such as Nutro, Royal Canin and Medi-Cal (from vet's office) are all examples of Premium foods. Foods such as Whiskas, Friskies, and Meow Mix are examples of cheaper foods that can wreak havoc on your cat's health.
- **Add canned foods to your cat's diet.** Cats are not generally big drinkers, which may possibly be one reason they can be more susceptible to getting urinary crystals. So ideally, cats need approximately 50% of their diet in the form of wet food to help reduce the workload on the kidneys and to help keep the urine dilute. Cats can thrive well on a mixed balance of dry and canned food, as long as it is complete and balanced. If your cat isn't a big wet food eater (most cats do enjoy it), then ensure that he is eating quality kibble and drinking water every day.
- **Consider Raw Foods.** If you have the time, you might consider feeding your cat a nutritiously-prepared raw food diet. There are a number of websites dealing with this topic or you could speak to a knowledgeable food representative in your local pet store that sells frozen or raw food.

The saying "You get what you pay for" is so very true when it comes to purchasing cat food. People who choose to buy cheaper forms of food (thinking they are saving money) are living in a "false economy" for a number of reasons:

- The cat needs to eat almost twice as much of the cheaper carb-filled store brand to get the necessary nutrients it gets in a normal feeding of premium food.
- The continued feeding of substandard food will eventually contribute to, or even cause, serious medical conditions that will require costly vet care. Such medical conditions are: Feline Diabetes, IBD (inflammatory bowel disease), Urinary crystals and cystitis, Chronic Renal (kidney) Failure.

There are some foods that should never be fed to a cat, or fed only in small amounts:

- **Chocolate** - Contains caffeine and theobromine - can be toxic and affect the heart and nervous system
- **Canned Tuna** - Contains an enzyme that causes a B1 deficiency, which then can lead to neurological problems and ultimately death.
- **Milk / dairy products** - Some cats do not have the necessary enzyme lactase, which breaks down the lactose in milk. The end result is diarrhea.
- **Dog Food** - If fed repeatedly can cause malnutrition, and due to lack of sufficient amounts of taurine, can cause blindness and heart disease.
- **Onions/Garlic** - Contain sulfoxides / disulfides which can cause anemia
- **Raw Fish** - Regular feeding can result in a Vitamin B deficiency, leading to loss of appetite, seizures, and sometimes death.

More information on what not to feed your cat is readily available on the internet or from your local veterinarian.

So the solution is what Simon says - "**Feed your cat right!**" If you are currently not feeding your cat a proper diet, then try to gradually switch him over to a good diet. A sudden change in food can upset his system, ie diarrhea. Mix the old food with the new food as suggested below:

	New Food	Old Food
Days 1 - 3	25%	75%
Days 4 - 6	50%	50%
Days 7 - 9	75%	25%
Day 10	100%	

Submitted by,
Lauralee Porter
Intake/ Adoptions Coordinator

Rule of Feline Frustration: When your cat has fallen asleep on your lap and looks utterly content and adorable, you will suddenly have to go to the bathroom.

C.A.R.E.S. VOLUNTEERS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE.

Submitted by, Carol Briner, Volunteer Co-coordinator

All the good work that CARES accomplishes is due to the dedication of the volunteers who continue to work for the cats. We are forever grateful to these people!

Currently, there are 8 volunteers on the board of directors who oversee the operations of the shelter. Committees that the board has set up, assist in planning activities and in making decisions. These include a fund raising committee, a building committee, and a medical committee.

Twelve volunteers work at the CARES adoption centre, located in the Langley Petsmart store. These people have a very responsible job screening potential adopters for suitability, as well as educating them on how to properly care for their new kitty.

There are also volunteers who foster cats in their homes. Most often the foster cats are mom cats with their kittens, but there are times when cats with special needs will be taken to a foster home for extra care and attention.

Last but not least are the shelter volunteers, 57 of them, who perform the necessary chores such as feeding the cats, cleaning the shelter, socializing the cats and giving medications.

If you would like to volunteer, call Carol at 604-202-0713.

The Sunday Shelter Morning Crew



Back Row: Lisa (holding Scamper), Joanna, Angela
Front Row: Alana and Liz



HAVE YOURSELF A PURRFECT LITTLE CHRISTMAS



Christmastime is fast approaching and it will be time once again to "deck the halls with boughs of holly". Those of us with furry family members need to take extra special care when we decorate our homes.

Most of us know that Poinsettia plants can be hazardous as they can cause irritations to the mouth and throat as well as induce vomiting. But there are many other plants to watch out for. Some of these can cause violent illness and even death in pets. They are: Holly, Crown of Thorns, Christmas Roses, Jerusalem Cherry (with the pretty red berries), and Mistletoe. The Japanese Yew (which looks like a pine tree with dark green needles and appealing red fruits can cause almost immediate death if ingested.

Plants aren't the only things to think about as safety hazards for our pets. Here are some things we can do to prevent possible injury to our pets at Christmastime.

- Wrap aluminum foil around exposed Christmas tree light cords as a deterrent to chewing them.
- Take steps to prevent your cat from knocking down the tree. Use clear fishing line to tie the tree to an eyehook affixed to the ceiling or wall stud.
- Try to hang breakable ornaments higher out of reach and secure firmly. Hang wooden, plastic, or stuffed ornaments on the lower branches.
- Avoid using garland, icicles, tinsel or angel hair. All no-no's! If ingested, these can be deadly for kitty!
- Don't leave pieces of ribbon or bows lying around which can be ingested by your kitty. Give the kitty a toy to play with to distract him while you are wrapping your gifts.
- Do not leave candles unattended with your kitty around. No further explanation needed here. The reasons are obvious.
- Feed kitty special people treats in real moderation. Some of our rich Christmas foods can cause kitty to get sick! Be especially careful of turkey bones and skin which your cat could choke on.

From our shelter to yours, we wish you and your pets a safe and purrfectly wonderful Christmas!



VOLUNTEERS

Would you like to volunteer? There are many opportunities available!
If you have a few hours a week or month to spare, call us at 604-532-5632
or visit "Contact Us" on our website at www.langleyCARES.net.

I am interested in:

- _____ helping at the shelter
 - _____ fostering cats and/or kittens
 - _____ working at adoption centre
 - _____ assisting with the newsletter/web site
 - _____ assisting with fundraising
-



DONATIONS

You can help by making a tax deductible donation.

Yes, I would like to help by contributing

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$10.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ OTHER |



MEMBERSHIPS

I would like to become a member for an annual fee of \$25. A tax receipt will be issued.
(NOTE: The annual fee for volunteers is \$10.)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ PROVINCE _____

PHONE # _____ POSTAL CODE _____

EMAIL _____



OUR MAILING ADDRESS:
505, 8840 210TH Street Box 290
Langley BC V1M 2Y2