



Newsletter

What's New, Pussycat?

October 2020



Cat's Cradle Pivots to Keep Saving Lives During Covid-19

Spring is the season that brings us promises of new life, new beginnings, renewal of energy...and what a surprise we all got this year! With the arrival of new growth and new beginnings came the arrival of “the new normal.” Everyone has been impacted in some way by Covid-19. All of us have been forced to learn and adapt to life in a pandemic; who would have ever thought face masks would be a fashion statement? Who thought hand sanitizer, Clorox wipes, thermometers and toilet paper would fly off the shelves faster than Furbies or Cabbage Patch Dolls? Some of us are working from home, many of us are deemed essential, and sadly, some of us are now out of work.

“Social distancing” the new phrase we humans are acutely aware of are trying our best to practice. But this new habit has been lost on the feline world, however, because kitten season once again arrived in full force!

Because the kitty population is oblivious to the situation we humans find ourselves in, we at Cat's Cradle have scrambled to adapt our programs to comply with new guidelines and help those in need. It is of utmost importance to keep our employees, volunteers and clients safe while being available to help all the cats and kittens we possibly can.

Christy Tabor, our Foster Coordinator, found herself in a unique situation this year. Gearing up for kitten season is always a challenge: not only did she have an increased need for supplies to accommodate the increased influx, but there was also a greater need for foster homes to house them. Luckily, new foster training has been done online for the last two years, so it was not necessary to hurriedly implement this procedure.



Christy Tabor

(Continued on page 2)

“Pivot” (continued from page 1)

While we lost many JMU student fosters due to COVID restrictions, we did receive more foster applications from people now temporarily off work or working from home. March, we actually had more available fosters than cats and kittens! (Not to worry, all qualified fosters did get kitties.) Christy not only received the usual foster applications from Harrisonburg, Rockingham County & Augusta County, but she had many new foster recruits from Nelson County, Rockbridge County and the Charlottesville area. Last year from March through July we took in 326 cats; this year in the same time period we took in 349 cats.



Jill Myers

Jill Myers, our Adoption Coordinator, has worked closely with the foster program to keep adoptions rolling. She has had to modify her process to comply with current safety guidelines from both PetSmart and Cat’s Cradle. PetSmart has postponed in-store adoption events at this time, so Jill is working more directly with our foster team to introduce adopters to our pre-adoptable and available cats. As applications arrive, she contacts the prospective adopter and goes through the interview process. Jill tries very hard to match the right person with the right cat, and will then contact fosters via phone or email for

bios and photos of their foster kitties. Adopters are then shown pictures and videos, and they will use FaceTime or Zoom to ‘meet’ the kitties. Some positive aspects of this process are that she can spend more time really talking to the adopters to have a good feel of what type kitty they are looking for and there is a more personal connection with the foster and the adopter. If a kitten is pre-adopted, fosters have been keeping adopters updated with pictures and videos. Last year from March-July we had 198 adoptions; this year we had 257 despite the inconveniences placed on all involved! Go, Jill and the foster team!!!

The actual physical adoption protocol has changed as well. Pickups and contract signing are still done at Pet Smart; however, all parties are required to wear masks and keep a six-foot distance. Jill has been scheduling adoptions in half hour intervals; the actual process takes approximately 15 minutes, but these intervals have allowed enough time between clients to thoroughly clean the area, including the signing pens!

Al in all, despite the challenges everyone has had to face, we have been able to adapt and overcome many of the obstacles placed before us. We look forward to returning to our former lifestyle even stronger with lessons learned from these uncertain times.

We couldn’t do this without our awesome staff and volunteer fosters - - thanks to every one of you for putting your compassion into action!!!



Happy Adopters!



Petco Foundation Invests in Lifesaving Work of Cat's Cradle

**July 2020 Grant of \$2,000 will allow continued expansion of
Trap Neuter Return Program**

Cat's Cradle is thrilled to announce it has been awarded another \$2,000 grant from the Petco Foundation to continue the expansion of our lifesaving Trap Neuter Return program!

The Petco Foundation investment will pay for veterinary fees associated with spay/neuter surgeries, allowing us to prevent unwanted litters in area shelters. We are very grateful for the continued support of the Petco Foundation, and its investment in our lifesaving programs. #PFpartner

To learn more about the Petco Foundation, visit www.petcofoundation.org or join the conversation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram by using the hashtag #PetcoFamily or #PFpartner.

How You Are Making a Lifesaving Difference in 2020!



- Adoptions (through August): 393
- Cats/Kittens Rescued (through August): 501
- Spay/Neuter Surgeries (through July): 1,417
- Medical Assistance Clients Helped (through July): 93

CATAID-20 Strikes A Final Chord Of Success!

Take A “ME-BOW”!!!!!!



Summertime Challenge 2020 Rocked It!

Thanks to our Rockstar supporters! You have done it yet again - - we exceeded our \$50,000 goal for funds raised and were able to receive \$50,000 in matching funds from our wonderful, anonymous donor. Your Challenge contributions totaled \$69,608.46 - - MEWOW!!!!!! The Summertime Challenge, our single largest annual fundraiser, is critical to support all of our lifesaving programs. We can't do it without you - - and, once again, you stepped up to perform 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.

PURRVANA - - \$1,000 and up

Estate of Helen Hudson
RZ Foundation
Jackie Zehring
Janet Doerr
Roxanna Spencer
Anonymous
Community Foundation Central
Blue Ridge/ Gwen David Fund
Donna Whitley-Smith
Jennifer Kirkland
John and Crystal Yates
Judi and Mike Salvino
Kenneth and Sandy Keller
Laura Wisman
Mary Crosier
Mary Louise Long
Maureen Ward
Nancy and Dan Herney
Twyla Austin

DEF LEOPARD - - \$500 to \$999

Sharon and Jay Foley
Avent Beck
Betsy Bolton
Christina and Phillip Updike
Dana Berliner
Grace Watt and Karen Yang
Judith and Zack Perdue
Larry and Jo Ann Diehl
Nathalie and Peter Capelluto
Page Paws
Suzanne Rogerson
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Virginia Veterinary Specialists, P.C.

CAT SABBATH - - \$250 to \$499

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Judge Marvin and Grace Hillsman
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Amanda Delorenzo
Cassie Williams and Travis Olson
Charlotte Allen
Dennis Gallagher
Jamie Kukla
Jane Dinsmore
Laurie and John Ziegler
Lindalou Friesen
Michael Hickman
Mike and Susan Koch
Nancy Bradburn
Renee Moomau
Rosemary Wagner

Summertime Challenge Giving (Continued)



PUDDYCAT DOLLS - - \$150 to \$249

Alisha Hammer
Asterie and Gene Provenzo
Jessica Wenger
June Clarke
Kelly Stark
Anonymous
River City Collective
Sheena Ramirez
Sherry Harris
Teresa Elia
The Blackbaud Giving Fund
Carolyn Dull
Debbie Hendricks
Gregory Tait
Guy and Valerie Stephens
Jamf Nation Global Foundation
Sharon and Richard Showalter
Sharon Angle
William Anderson



Would you like to help Cat's Cradle in their lifesaving mission? 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!

Cat's Cradle's "Other" Summertime Challenge

Covid-19 has challenged everyone on so many fronts. From finances to a simple trip to the grocery store, we've all made adjustments to our daily lives and formed contingency plans when for when those adjustments don't work out.

The same goes for Cat's Cradle. From its inception, Cat's Cradle's mission has been to "ensure and maintain and safe, compassionate community for cats in the Shenandoah Valley." But in the early days of lockdowns, social distancing, layoffs, and many other issues, we were very fearful that this pandemic might force Cat's Cradle to radically revise who we were at our core and what we did for the community.

But through our highly successful Beat the Heat and Summertime Challenge fundraisers, you all stunned us as donations and good will poured out. Thank you so much for helping Cat's Cradle maintain the high level of service you've come to expect.

Your support has proved especially vital this summer. We've experienced a deluge of calls related to the population explosion in socialized and feral cat colonies. Likewise, there's been a dramatic uptick of people reaching out because the pandemic depleted their bank accounts, forcing them to make hard decisions about getting their kitties medical care.

One of the most important ways we maintain our 'compassionate community' is by facilitating spay/neuter and TNR calls, and we've had a lot this year. Denise Hale, one of our incredible phone counselors, tells about the challenging nature of 2020:



Denise Hale

"We have been busy indeed. Our call volume has risen tremendously...We are taking 20-35 calls on average a day, and lots of them are spay/neuter calls. People also call looking for someone to take kittens from their property, which can make for very difficult conversations. Most people don't realize if you move cats from a colony, more cats will take their place. We try to be informative about the options we offer, and it's always rewarding when people agree to those options rather than taking other routes to remove the cats."

In "normal times," we estimate Cat's Cradle gets around 4,000 calls a year, and we're set to blow right past that number. This increase demonstrates just how vital our assistance programs are. Despite the high call volume we've had so far this year, Cat's Cradle is very proud to be able to continue giving so many families and felines the help they so desperately need. Who knows what the situation would have looked like in our area were we not able to follow through with our mission... While the country still grapples with the uncertainties of this pandemic, you can rest assured that everyone at Cat's Cradle is working tirelessly to save every life we can!

It is with humbleness and gratitude that we (and the kitties!) thank you for your continued support this year - we truly wouldn't be here without you!!!

Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge Awards Cat's Cradle with a Pet Retention Grant

We are so grateful to the Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge (CFCBR), which serves our Staunton/Augusta/Waynesboro pet owners and caretakers! Through the Community Grants Programs, CFCBR just awarded Cat's Cradle a \$3,500.00 grant to help support our pet retention program. Through this program, Cat's Cradle works to keep pets and their families together by assisting with veterinary fees for vulnerable members of the community - low income, elderly, disabled, veterans, victims of domestic violence, and others. The program also provides financial assistance for short-term boarding in emergency situations so that owners will not have to surrender their cats to the shelter.



CFCBR is a wonderful partner for area non-profits, and Cat's Cradle appreciates the ongoing support of the foundation for helping us to save lives, one family at a time!



Board News!

We're pleased to announce that Sue Gast, long-time Cat's Cradle volunteer, has joined the Cat's Cradle Board of Directors! Originally from Upstate New York, Sue relocated to Waynesboro five years ago, which is when she started volunteering with us. Sue has worn many hats - she's worked at the Downtown Center greeting visitors and answering calls for assistance, trained volunteers at PetSmart, assisted with fundraisers and events, and currently helps our Intake and Foster Coordinator with various administrative tasks. Sue has been indispensable as a volunteer - we are so happy to welcome her to the board!





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2020 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.cvegives.org. Cat's Cradle's charity code is 200079, but you can also search us by name - - Cat's Cradle of the Shenandoah Valley.



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P Buckley Moss

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October 1-14

With the purchase of any select cat print from the P Buckley Moss Gallery of Waynesboro, a generous portion of the proceeds will be donated to Cat's Cradle of the Shenandoah Valley. Meet the artist in Waynesboro, Oct. 9-11. Call (540) 949-6473 for event details.

540-433-1135
www.catscradleva.org

