



Four Hearts Foundation Newsletter

Last year we saw quite a few success stories, none of which could have been possible without you! Here are just a few of the happy 'tails' your donations helped create:



Spice

Spice came to her owner as a rescue kitty. Her owner originally took in a pregnant momma cat and ended up with Spice. Already having a full house of pets and being a single mother, she really just couldn't afford to get Spice spayed, especially since Spice also had an umbilical hernia that needed to be repaired. Luckily, she heard about our foundation and we were able to step in and give much needed assistance. Now, Spice is hanging with her friends and feeling fine.



Bingo

This cute doxi mix was referred to us from the Belleville Area Humane Society because he couldn't walk. Bingo had hip dysplasia.

Even though Bingo had not yet been adopted, the staff knew he just needed a helping hand to get him on his way. Who knew how far Bingo would actually go. After Bingo had his surgery, he was sent back to the shelter to heal. While convalescing, Bingo met his soon-to-be new family. They instantly fell in love with Bingo and agreed to take over the rest of his medical care and expenses. Next thing we knew, Bingo was moving with his new family south to Florida. He got there just in time to enjoy spring training. Way to hit a home run, Bingo!



Bentley

This female Cocker Spaniel was born in March and able to be spayed thanks to your continued contributions. She was referred to us by the Belleville Area Humane Society.

Max

We received a call near Christmas about Max. His owner originally brought him to the vet because his belly was getting bigger and bigger (and no, not because of holiday treats). It was determined that he had a tumor growing in his spleen. He was having quite a rough time and needed surgery to have it removed. His owner was also going through a bit of a rough time and was not able to afford the surgery on her own. Max was a good candidate for this type of surgery and his vet felt that he would pull through with flying colors, but it was still risky. Max had surgery on December 27th and did awesome! His vet was able to remove an 8lb. tumor. He is now home and enjoying the new year with a new lease on life, all because of your generosity.



Max's 8lb. tumor!

more stories inside!

Missy

Missy, a 4 year old Chihuahua, was given to her new owner by an elderly woman going into an assisted living program. Unfortunately, Missy's original owner was not allowed to take her with her. Luckily, she found a new home, but before she could get started on her new family, Missy needed to go to the vet and be examined, get up-to-date on shots, and be spayed. That's when we got the call for some assistance. Now, Missy is a spayed, healthy, and happy Chihuahua living the good life in her new home.

Xander

Xander came to us in a state of emergency. He is a 13 year old, blind, miniature poodle that happened to wander out of his backyard and, unfortunately, straight into his neighbor's. His neighbor had two larger dogs that were a bit unfriendly and not at all pleased with Xander's intrusion onto their property. Almost immediately, one dog began to attack Xander and shake him like a rag doll. A good samaritan with a kind heart and quite a bit of bravery put himself in the middle of the dogfight and protected Xander until help could arrive. The good samaritan got bit, but not nearly as badly as Xander. Xander had over 13 bite wounds on his neck but fortunately no broken bones. He was in shock and seriously injured, but he would be okay. Thank you to the individual who stepped in, and thanks to all of you who made it possible for Xander to make a full recovery.

Let There Be Light!



No more procedures in the dark! Though not quite as bad as being in total darkness, Dr. Miles had been doing our monthly spay and neuter events with only a reading light. While it did help light the way for over 100 surgeries, something with better quality was needed. The Belleville Area Humane Society received a grant specifically for the new surgery light, and now Dr. Miles and her team have a brighter future to look forward to with our spay and neuter events.

Thank You All!

Donations (In Cash or In Kind)

- Joyce Fisher
- Four Paws Animal Hospital
- HALO Group
- Dr. Jessen
- Mary Goss
- Dr. Harres
- Dr. Russ Kinzinger
- Stephen Krische
- Ruth Erlinger

Pet Memorials

In Memory of Kadi

- Jim, Mary Barbara, Jakob, and Kristin Kurtz

In Memory of Mia

- Kenneth Krieg and Samantha Schuetzenhofer

In Memory of Chelsea

- Kerry and Kelly Saunders
- Colin Kricensky and Ray Speed
- Jan and Jonathan Gettys

Dr. Miles shares her perspective on one of life's hardest roads every pet owner will take

On January 15, 2011, my younger brother, David, lost a true friend. David called me from Santa Fe to tell me that Franklin, his elderly beagle, had come to the end of his long battle with congestive heart failure. Months earlier, David and I had The Talk. As veterinarians, we have The Talk with clients several times a week. We use phrases like "quality of life" and "making a kind and humane decision" and discuss redwood boxes versus ceramic urns. When The Talk is with one's brother, it becomes a profoundly different experience. David was direct and matter-of-fact at that time; he knew Franklin's disease process was worsening, and wanted to know more about the actual procedure of euthanasia. I told him he was smart to ask questions and plan ahead, as this would make it easier when the time came.

Intellectually, we all know that animals don't live forever. We think we have prepared our hearts when our pets' muzzles turn gray and arthritis slows their steps. But somehow, it hits us like a ton of bricks when we realize that the time to say good-bye is imminent. David knew when he adopted Franklin from a rescue group in 2004 that he was already seven years old and had a mitral valve murmur. David dutifully took Franklin in for EKG's, chest radiographs, and an annual echocardiogram. Without fail, he camouflaged benazapril, furosemide, pimobendan, and spironolactone in Franklin's food. He rushed Franklin to the emergency clinic when he suffered a bout of hemorrhagic gastroenteritis that decompensated his cardiac insufficiency. David, a schoolteacher, obtained an extra credit card to pay for Franklin's emergency visit because, as David said, there was no other option—Franklin was a part of his family.

On January 15th, David woke up to find Franklin breathing hard and unable to stand. He was maxxed out on his medications and David knew he would be taking him to the veterinary clinic for the last time. He was with Franklin in his final minutes and said a tearful farewell to the dog who had been a sweet comfort throughout a bitter divorce, and a steadfast companion during lonely times. David remarked to me that he had no idea how attached you could become to a dog.

I remember David's words whenever I have The Talk with a client. We are trained as scientists to be objective and rational, so that we may make intelligent and logical decisions about euthanasia, but it is very hard for a pet owner to lose a pet, even when they know that euthanasia is the only kind and logical choice. It was obvious to David that the rational thing to do was to let Franklin go, but it was incredibly difficult to take that last trip to the vet and return home with a collar and leash and no dog. I cried my tears with David that day; Franklin was a wonderful dog, and David had given him a really good life. Franklin's passing made me sorry that I didn't have a magic wand to wave, to make it possible for David to enjoy his companionship always. David told me that he recently dreamed that Franklin was not gone, but sitting in his living room again, wagging his white-tipped tail. He awoke to the truth and sighed. Franklin, dear friend, we miss you! You were simply the best.



In Loving Memory of Kadi...

"On August 12, 2010, our baby Kadi lost her battle to kidney disease at the young age of just 5 years old. Kadi was a cute, cuddly white Llasa Apso. She was given to us by a family who could no longer care for her, when she was 2 years old. From day one, she fit into our family like a glove. She never got tired of playing, she always wanted to be held or cuddled and her personality was like no other dog. As everyone who has ever lost a pet knows, there are no words to describe the void in our home without her. We went from a no pet family to two dogs in two years and frankly now I can't imagine our house without a pet! Kadi will forever live on in our hearts and no other dog will ever take her place and so we are honoring her memory this Christmas with a donation to the Four Hearts Foundation. Thanks for the wonderful work you do!"

Fondly,
Jim, Mary Barbara, Jakob and Kristin Kurtz



We've Got a Winner!

A big congratulations goes out to the winner of our TV raffle:

Wendy Kricensky!

The drawing was held on Wednesday, December 15, 2010, at the office of accounting firm Allison Knapp & Siekmann, Ltd. Wendy was beyond thrilled with her prize, a Samsung 46" LED flat screen. "I was Christmas shopping with my daughter when I got the call from Tracy (Eichholz, Four Hearts' President). I was stunned! I started screaming in the middle of Hobby Lobby! It's just an awesome TV, and even better, it makes my living room look bigger!" Thanks so much to all those who participated in the raffle, and congratulations again, Wendy!

The Four Hearts Foundation was established in June, 2005 as a tribute to our canine and feline family members who have crossed the Rainbow Bridge.

In their memory, we work toward a better life and future for the homeless, abused, unwanted and unloved animals in the community. Our goal is to make a difference, even though it may be just one small heart at a time.



Tracy Eichholz, President
Jan Gettys, Treasurer
Christy Parkin, Secretary
Noelle R. Miles, D.V.M.
Jessica Draughn, Webmaster



We've Only Just Begun...

According to the Humane Society of the United States, an estimated 6-8 million animals enter shelters each year, and tragically, every year over 3 million cats and dogs are being euthanized. As we all know, spaying and neutering is an important method of battling that heart-breaking problem. Spay/neuter is the only permanent, 100% effective method of birth control for dogs and cats.

Since our first clinic in December, 2009, our spay/neuter "Dream Team" led by Dr. Noelle Miles has successfully completed over one hundred spay/neuters! Thanks to our friends at the Belleville Area Humane Society who have allowed us to use their facility, thanks to Dr. Miles and her loyal team of helpers, and THANK YOU, our donors, for making this happen -- let's get to 211 in 2011!

For more information on our spay/neuter program or to schedule an appointment for a future clinic, please contact Tracy at (618) 623-9956.

Four Hearts Foundation, Inc.

P.O. Box 361 O'Fallon, IL 62269

paws@fourheartsfoundation.org





The Four Hearts Foundation, Inc.



invites you to a

TRIVIA NIGHT

Saturday, March 12, 2011

Knights of Columbus Hall
5420 Old Collinsville Road
Fairview Heights, IL

\$10 per person, 6-8 people per table

Cash Prizes Awarded to 1st, 2nd & 3rd place teams

50/50 Drawing

Attendance Prizes

Silent Auction

Delectable Desserts Available for Purchase

B.Y.O. Snacks

Cash Bar – no outside beverages allowed

Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Trivia begins promptly at 7:00 p.m.

To reserve your table, call (618) 623-9956 or email tracy@fourheartsfoundation.org

All proceeds benefit the Four Hearts Foundation, Inc., a local animal welfare organization founded in 2005 dedicated to solving the pet overpopulation problem.