



Newsletter

What's New, Pussycat?

February 2023



Jackie Zehring



Rose Zafren

Beat the Heat in 2023 and the Price Tag is Getting Hot! 🥵

Just like the cost of eggs has gone through the roof, so have the cost of altering kitties. We've already heard that one of our vet partners is raising their spay/neuter surgery rates by 20%!

Over the past few years, we've been climbing the cat tree of success regarding our spay/neuter numbers, consistently altering nearly 3,000 cats a year. We're able to help fund these surgeries because we've been getting higher copays from the community and because we've sought out the best rates for surgeries and supplies by diversifying our veterinary partners.



But the biggest reason we have been able to continue this vital program is YOU! Your consistent donations have allowed us to sustain our programs at that rate. And I hope you're thrilled to learn that, in 2022, we even beat our previous record by altering 3,130 cats (689 of which were TNR)!!! What an incredible number!

While that's a huge accomplishment, funding these surgeries came with a heavy price tag. Spay/neuter/rabies vaccine costs are the largest portion of our veterinary fees budget. In 2022, our programs incurred \$256,000 in veterinary fees (\$176,000 of that for spay/neuter) almost \$40,000 over what we anticipated!! Because spay/neuter is such a core part for our

mission, we couldn't turn away people and cats in need, but this meant we had to tap into emergency/reserve funds to make sure the families who needed our help got it. We can't continue long-term to draw from those reserve funds for ongoing program expenses, and that's where Beat the Heat comes in!

(Continued next page)

(Beat the Heat - Continued)

Jackie Zehring, long-time patron saint of Beat the Heat, has once again offered \$10,000 matching money to this year's challenge. And RZ Foundation, established to honor the wonderful Rose Zafren, is back for their second year and have upped their matching money pledge from \$10,000 to \$15,000 because they know these economic conditions are giving us cat scratch fever! To RZ and Jackie, THANK YOU SO VERY MEOW-CH! They're investing in Cat's Cradle because they trust our ability to make life-changing differences in the community.

To help stop our reserves from dwindling and to keep our vital spay/neuter program sustainable, this year we hope to reach a sum total of \$75,000 from this Beat the Heat challenge. With the \$25,000 matching money, that means we need *at least* \$50,000 from the community. It's a big ask, but that's what we absolutely need to fend off rising spay/neuter costs and to continue serving those who desperately need our assistance. The last thing we want to do is tell people 'no' when they can't afford to pay the full price to get their pet altered or when they need to prevent a colony from ballooning.

Spay/neuter assistance is the one of the most important programs we offer to make a long-term difference in shelter intake and euthanasia. Please help us keep making a BIG DIFFERENCE by contributing to Beat the Heat from February 15th to April 1st. You can save lives by donating on our website or mailing us a check during that time. (Note: Donations must be above and beyond recurring or pledged donations.)



Sometimes kitties make TNR easy!

From big donations to small ones, every dollar helps! Thank you so much for putting your compassion into action!!

The Mailbag!

I wanted to share with you a picture of my cat, Hannah, formerly Runt, as we celebrate her 20th birthday. I know you have had many successful adoptions and I want to congratulate you on the important work that you do. You brought Hannah to an area Petsmart here and I fell in love. I have tried my best to give her a wonderful safe life and I adore her. She spends most of her time now in my bedroom where she has everything she needs.....windows looking out to trees and the street, an interior window overlooking my living room where she can overlook my downstairs area without being harassed by her younger "brother" Bailey, my bed which she takes over at night and day, a bathroom holding her own kitty litter box.....she is, after all, the queen.



Hannah

Thank you for the important work that you do and always remember the joy you bring to both cats and their humans. Keep up the good work!!

Ellen Mercer
Hannah's human

EXCITING NEWS FROM THE BOARD!

As 2023 begins, the board of Cat's Cradle has exciting news to share: we have hired our first full-time Executive Director to manage Cat's Cradle's day-to-day operations - a development that will bring long-term stability to our organization and allow us to grow and develop our people, our outreach, and our programs.

We have tried for years to allocate funds for this purpose in reserves, but various program or operational needs inevitably arose. So, we were thrilled when one of our generous donors made a restricted, endowed gift to create and maintain this position so that we could hire an Executive Director and take NO FUNDS from the community's donations to Cat's Cradle. This gift is not intended for programs or other operational costs, but is a wholly separate fund. After a nationwide search with over 80 applicants (MeWOW!), we have engaged the dynamic and passionate Sherri Heishman to lead Cat's Cradle moving forward.

Sherri brings a wealth of experience and passion to this new role. Her professional career has included personnel management as well as a great deal of experience in charitable giving. Sherri has had years of experience with Cat's Cradle as a volunteer, foster, and more recently, marketing and design consultant. In Sherri's words, "Cat's Cradle has been near and dear to my heart for many years. I couldn't be happier how the stars aligned for this opportunity at this point in my career. Together, with the amazing board of directors, employees and volunteers, I strive to make an impact and give a voice to the most vulnerable cats in our communities." Under Sherri's leadership, we have many initiatives planned that extend across all of our programs and operations and we look forward to sharing news of these initiatives throughout the year.



Sherri with her kitty "Jackie"

The funding that has allowed us to create the Executive Director position is not to be used for programs - but our programs are needed more than ever! We are now answering around 10,000 calls each year. We know that our programs budget will need to increase this year to cover rising costs in almost every aspect of our work. In other words, we will be counting on you more than ever to help us keep our programs strong in 2023! We promise to continue to use your funds wisely - almost 90% of your donations each year go directly to program-related expenses.

We look forward to all of you getting to meet Sherri. Her direct email is sherri@catscradleva.org. Drop her a line!

Jennifer Kirkland - Board President

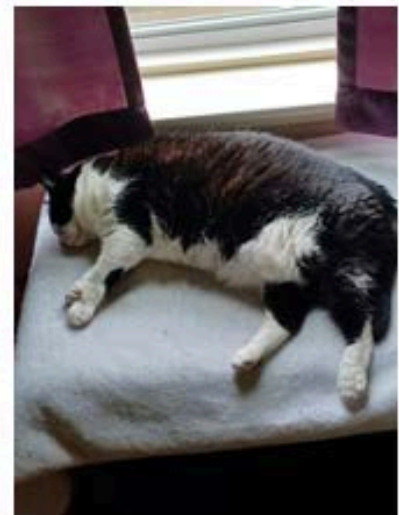
2022 Program Numbers - - LOOK WHAT YOU ACCOMPLISHED!

Intake	658	
Adoptions	625	584 cats and kitties were adopted to local families and 41 were adopted through transports to partner shelters.
Spay/neuter	3,130 surgeries facilitated	A NEW RECORD!!! 689 of these alterations were Trap-Neuter-Return.
Medical Assistance	172 families helped and care completed	We authorized over 240 families for assistance through this program, but not all ultimately needed/obtained treatment or have been billed as we go to print.

These numbers are amazing, and we can only report these lifesaving accomplishments because of your steadfast support. To bring the numbers into focus, we'll share just one story from the thousands of feline and human lives you helped us to touch in 2022.

A note from a medical assistance recipient:

“Thank y'all so much for helping me. Molly is doing good now thanks to your help. Molly was just three weeks old when we found her, and she is now eight. My wife recently passed in January of 2022 and Molly and I are very thankful for your continued help of the elderly.”



Cat's Cradle Receives Pet Retention Grant

Cat's Cradle of the Shenandoah Valley is honored to receive a \$7,000.00 grant from the Community Foundation of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County (CFHR), made possible by the generosity of the Hildred Neff Memorial Fund of the Community Foundation! This grant will provide significant support to our pet retention program, which provides financial assistance to low-income and other vulnerable cat owners and caretakers to defray the costs of veterinary bills and help them keep their pets. In 2014 we helped twelve families in this way – in 2022, we were able to authorize help to over 240 families for their pets! Expenses for this program now approximate \$45,000 annually. All grant funds will be used to pay veterinary fees.



Coffee & Cats Open Monday – Saturday 10 – 5 starting February 27th!

Currently open Tuesday – Saturday 10 – 5



COFFEE & CATS
at's cradle

**WANT THE PURRFECT INSTA PHOTO?
WANT TO LOVE ON KITTIES?**

**Come visit
Harrisonburg's first
Cat Café!**

Grab a cup of coffee and enjoy visiting with cats and kittens in one of our kitty rooms. All proceeds to our spay/neuter program.

 **BOOK YOUR
SESSION TODAY!**
catscradleva.org

2022 Donations and Three-Year Impact Honor Circles

We are honored to recognize our supporters from 2022: Individual and business donors, foundation grantors (competitive grants and others), event sponsors, matching and rewards program donors, and our beloved recurring donors! Thanks to each of you for putting your compassion into action by donating to support our lifesaving work. We are particularly grateful to those donors in our Three-Year Honor Impact Circles. These donors have given at major gift levels for the past three consecutive years or more, making a sustained impact on our organization.



Platinum Circle
\$10,000 and up

Lynn Reams
John & Terri Haddick
RZ Foundation
The Lynne Cooper Harvey
Foundation, Inc.
Donor requesting anonymity

Gold Circle
\$5,000 - \$9,999

Jackie Zehring
Janet Doerr
PetSmart Charities
Network for Good
The Community Foundation
Harrisonburg & Rockingham

Silver Circle
\$1,000 - \$4,999

Amazon Smile Foundation
Twyla Austin
Christy Cacciapaglia
Community Foundation of
the Central Blue Ridge
Mary Crosier
Harold Eskey
Courtney Fairchild
Harrisonburg Animal
Hospital
Nancy & Dan Herney
Ann Hurley
Elizabeth Ihle
Kenneth & Sandy Keller
Jennifer Kirkland

Kroger Rewards Program
Mary Louise Long
Maria Malerba
Sharon and Whit Menefee
Judi and Mike Salvino
Carolyn Snow
Roxanna Spencer
Krista Suter
Christina & Phillip Updike
Donna Whitley-Smith
John and Crystal Yates
Donors requesting anonymity



2022 Events

Alley Cat Tattoo
Brother's Craft Brewing
Harrisonburg Animal Hospital
Skipping Rock Beer
White Horse Auto Wash
White Oak Lavender Farm

2022 Matching/Rewards Programs

Amazon Smile
PetSmart Charities
City of Harrisonburg (License Plate Proceeds)
Kroger Rewards Program
Network for Good
The Merck Foundation

2022 Grantors

The Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge
The Lynne Cooper Harvey Foundation, Inc.
The Hildred Neff Memorial Fund of the Community
Foundation of Harrisonburg & Rockingham County
Petco Love Foundation
Robert M. Reedy & Jean S. Reedy Homeless Animal Fund
RZ Foundation

Pet Pal Monthly Recurring Donors

Twyla Austin	Danny and Debbie Link
Nicole Baker	Mary Lowery
Lisa Batchelder	David Mars
Kelsey Beckett	RaeAnn and Curtis Martin
Christine and Eric Blackman	Gwen Mersky
Megan Brown	Diana Miller
Richard Crist	Carolyn Price
Robert Duncan	Melisa and Edward Price
Joan and Rich Eberly	Susan Reynolds
Terry Elia	Laurance Russell
Jacque Golladay	Emily Shaffer
John & Terri Haddick	Roxanna Spencer
Stoney Heishman	Elizabeth Szabo
Christie and Tomas Herrera	Amy Taylor
Sherry Hood	Maureen Walsh
Heidi Hubbell	David Weintraub
Brenda and Michael HuYoung	Pamela West
Carlene Keeler	
Katie King	

2022 Gifts and Grants

\$10,000 and up

John & Terri Haddick
The Lynne Cooper Harvey Foundation, Inc.
Network for Good
Lynn Reams
Carol Ann Rhoads
Robert Ryder
RZ Foundation
Rachel Street
Thomas Wetsel
Jackie Zehring
Donors requesting anonymity

\$5,000 - \$9,999

Community Foundation of Harrisonburg &
Rockingham County
Janet Doerr
PetSmart Charities

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Alley Cat Tattoo
Amazon Smile Foundation
Twyla Austin
Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge
Gwendolyn David
Amy and Michael Derrick
Leighton & Kathryn Evans
Courtney Fairchild
Kenneth & Sandy Keller
Maria Malerba
Carolyn Snow
Roxanna Spencer
Christina & Phillip Updike
Donna Whitley-Smith
Donors requesting anonymity



\$1,000 - \$2,499

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Katherine B Clagett Charitable Trust
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Herman and Janet Mason Families Fund
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Jennifer Kirkland
Linda and Ken Kline
Kroger Rewards Program
Danny & Debbie Link
Mary Louise Long
David A. Mars
Sharon and Whit Menefee
Ellen Mercer
Sandra and Wayne Mongold
National Philanthropic Trust
PETCO Foundation
Suzanne D. Rogerson

\$500 - \$999

Bank of America Charitable Gift Fund
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Carol Butts
Frances Byers
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Carter Myers Automotive (CMA) Valley Subaru
Lynn Collins
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Community Foundation Of Western Massachusetts
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Terri Elia
Farmer's Bank
Fidelity Charitable
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Jennifer Weaver
White Horse Auto Wash
Frank Whitmer
Donors requesting anonymity



\$250 - \$499

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Diane and Wylie Walton
Pamela J. West
Donna Whisler
Joanna Yankey
Paula and Berlin Zirk



Help us Help Them.... Become a Pet Pal!



Want to help us year round by becoming a pet pal? Just visit catscradle.org and click on the donate tab. You can set up monthly recurring donations to help in various ways. A donation of **\$13 a month** helps pay for one cat to be altered and given all vaccines needed. For **\$17 a month**, you could cover basic rescue care for one foster cat to become adoption ready. And just **\$25 a month** would help to alter three precious kitties. If you enroll in our Pet Pal Program, you'll receive special mailings and goodies only available to the donors in this elite group! Come join the fun!

\$100 - \$249

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Donors requesting anonymity



Petco Love Invests in Lifesaving Work of Cat's Cradle

September 2022 Grant of \$1,500 helps Trap Neuter Return Program

Cat's Cradle is thrilled to announce it was awarded a \$1,500 grant in September from Petco Love to continue to provide Trap Neuter Return!

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

To learn more about Petco Love, visit petcolove.org and follow on Facebook Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn to be part of the lifesaving work Petco Love leaves every day.



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kitties like Hope!



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we are always here to help!
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540-433-1135



WE ARE GOING DIGITAL!



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