



KATS' TALES

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Kingdom Animal Shelter
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THE HEALING POWER OF PETS

All of us have heard of the benefits of having pets, that they can lower blood pressure, relieve anxiety. Some pets can sense an epileptic seizure coming on, can help bring us out of our shell, lift our spirits, literally make us feel physically better. There are stories of folk who are physically or emotionally challenged being opened up by loving and caring for a pet. Those who are incarcerated can be softened, become more vulnerable, let their guard down, and begin to reach out for re-entry into society by tending to a pet. Certainly in my own life, when I have felt sad or unwell, one of my cats is right there with me, just being a caring companion. They don't ask for anything. They just lie right up against me, staying there until I feel better.

For all the stories in the news, it is comforting to run into these stories first hand. Over the past year and a half, while working at the Kingdom Animal Shelter, there have been numerous stories of the healing power of pets. Several adopters came in because they had had cancer and had received good reports on their present status. For one, adopting kittens was a celebration of hope and the future. For another, she wanted a companion. And as it turned out, both the cat and the woman discovered the healing power of each for the other. It is absolutely heart-warming to see these two so happy together. Another story involves a much older person who was dying. Her cat stayed right by her side, never left, through the entire journey. After the woman passed, the family very much wanted to bring the cat into their home because the cat had been such a good companion to their mom. They wanted to, in a sense, keep their mother's spirit with them in the presence of her cat. Still another adopter was having a difficult time with feeling very down. Bringing kittens into her home has, in her words, "given her something to center her, something that needs her love and care". And as a result, her darkness is lifting. And these kittens have a wonderful loving home. And finally, a story from one of our volunteers. Her stepson and his fiancée visited this volunteer one weekend. The fiancée went upstairs to take a nap. One of the house cats, who is very shy and usually disappears when guests come, followed her upstairs, snuggled up to her, and began licking and pushing at an area on her neck. He just wouldn't stop. Ultimately, the fiancée got up and checked her neck...and found a lump. On her return home, she had the lump assessed and it was malignant. It seems the cat had sensed that. Had that not happened, it is hard to know how long it would have been before she found the lump. More and more, as I work at the Shelter, I love the cats, of course. But it isn't just about the cats. It is about the cats, it is about the people who adopt them, and about what they bring to each other's lives. It's about finding the right match of a particular cat, a particular person, and their unique situations.

Come in to Kingdom Animal Shelter and find your healing companion. We are located on Memorial Drive in St. Johnsbury. Our hours are Monday - Wednesday, and Friday, 4-6, Thursdays, 3:30-5:30, and Saturday and Sunday, noon to 3. Check out our website today. Submitted by Helen Morrison, KAS Board of Directors



LUKE SKYWALKER

HAN SOLO

Meet our ambassadors: Luke and his brother Han Solo. Luke is very playful, loves to run around, and he loves attention; he's definitely the social butterfly! Han loves to play, too. They both interact well with the other cats at the shelter and would love to go together to their forever home, if possible.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- August 9 1:00 at the shelter Granie Snow—Author reading: *Big Ole Striped Silas*
- August 31 Comfort Inn Benefit Raffle Drawing For your chance to win a 2 night stay in the Presidential or Vice-Presidential suite, or a one-year family pool membership, \$5 per ticket: call Sandy 802-673-7954

6 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF BEFORE YOU ADOPT A CAT (conc.)

5. Do you have the time to spend with a cat? Many people adopt cats because they buy into the myth that cats are low maintenance—all they need is a little food and a relatively clean litter box. Often they leave their little ones alone for hours every day, with no one to interact with and nothing to do. Some cats are left to "fend for themselves" while their people travel for a couple of days. Litter boxes are often neglected, scooped only every couple of days or less. These people are usually surprised when their cats start eliminating outside the litter box or develop other problems. Cats are not low-maintenance companions. In addition to needing a couple of meals or more a day, grooming, and immaculately clean litter boxes, they need mental and physical stimulation and someone to interact with. Leaving cats alone with nothing to do and no one to talk to often leads to lethargy, depression, and behavior challenges. Before adopting, make sure that you have time to spend with your cat and to do daily cat chores. Your new little kitty will need attention every day—including quality cuddle time and play. Although adopting a bonded pair of cats can help by keeping each other company, they still need the quality time with their favorite person. 6. Are there other animals in the household? Often people who want to adopt a cat live in households where there are other resident dogs and kitties. Not all dogs and cats are willing to share their homes and people with another cat. Make the safety and well-being of the newcomer and other animal occupants the priority. Know the temperaments and histories of all of them. It is mandatory that dogs have a history of living peacefully with cats, and that they have never chased or harmed any. Do not bring cats into situations where there are dogs who chase or are aggressive to cats. If cats already live in the household, check that they and the potential adoptee have peacefully coexisted with other cats. Some cats do great with other felines, while others would rather be kings or queens of the household and do not welcome other cats. Although cats can be a wonderful addition, they are a serious responsibility and a commitment. Before adopting, ask the questions—make sure that you are ready and that your home is the right home. Doing so can save you and the cat heartbreak and stress. By: Marilyn Krieger, certified cat behavior consultant, contributor, *Catster.com* newsletter, retrieved 2/12/2014

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Did you know....Egyptians and Romans alike believed cats to be majestic creatures. Both cultures held the animals in high regard, but Egyptians more so. In fact, many ancient Egyptians likened felines to the goddess Hathor, who took the form of a lion. When a pet cat died in ancient Egypt, the family mummified, buried, and mourned it.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT The purpose of the Kingdom Animal Shelter is to facilitate the placement of stray and unwanted animals and pets in desirable homes; to establish and maintain an animal shelter and associated procedures that promote health, care and handling; and to prevent overpopulation and the prevention of cruelty to animals. The animals in our care, our guests, are never euthanized merely because we lack space or because the animal's stay with us has exceeded a predefined amount of time.

Please forward this to your friends, family, co-workers, or anyone interested in supporting our shelter. If you no longer wish to receive emails from Kingdom Animal Shelter, please hit "Reply" and change the subject line to UNSUBSCRIBE. Kingdom Animal Shelter respects your privacy and will never share or sell your email address or other information.