Ruby’s Story

Human Cruelty: One of Many Reasons Tame Cats Belong Indoors

ICRA volunteer Ellen Lynch had met Dave and Carol a while ago in the pet food aisle of a local grocery store. This kind-hearted elderly couple from Oakland spoke proudly of a small group of fixed feral cats they had been feeding for several years on their limited income. Flash forward to October 16th when Dave called Ellen about a cat outside the normal group who was meowing for help. The cat – now known as Ruby – is in our adoption program awaiting a true happy ending to her nearly tragic story.

The ordeal for this beautiful, medium-haired, tortoiseshell stray had begun about one month prior when kids in a neighboring apartment house apparently took advantage of Ruby’s shy but friendly nature to harass and torture her. Dave and Carol tried to talk to them about leaving the cat alone, but the cruelty continued. The details are fuzzy, but at some point the couple heard or saw the kids tie what looked like jewelry around Ruby’s neck and a front paw so that she could not put her foot on the ground. Unfortunately, the cat disappeared for several weeks after that, and a lack of specifics about her torturers hampered the ability of Oakland Animal Services and others to provide concrete help. Dave called Ellen when Ruby reappeared, perhaps not coincidentally just after the kids had moved away.

Ellen delivered a humane trap to Dave and Carol that night. By morning, they had caught the injured cat. Ruby was taken directly to VCA Bay Area Pet Hospital, where three veterinarians worked diligently to remove a ligature-like planter chain that became embedded in her right wrist and then had scabbed over. Ruby’s surgery was successful, albeit touch-and-go as the veterinary team made every effort to avoid amputation.

Although Ruby would require extensive recovery time to loosen her frozen shoulder muscles and to medicate against possible bone infection, this innocent creature was finally on the road to the health and happiness she deserved all along.

One day post-surgery, Ruby’s eyes showed pure exhaustion and trepidation, but by day three her eyes had regained a sparkle. A long physical and emotional recovery lies ahead for Ruby. Still a bit wary from her trauma on the streets, she hisses a bit when you approach too quickly, but Ruby already trusts us enough to show her belly for gentle rubs. Warning! She cannot receive enough brushing and treats!!

If all goes well, Ruby will be ready to go to her forever home by Christmas. Might that be yours? Anyone who meets her will fall instantly in love. Despite the unbelievable pain and suffering she endured at the hands of a few cruel humans, lovely young Ruby has nothing but love to give!
There Are No Better Friends Than Sisters
Please Adopt Them!

Mindy and Missy are sisters born on the streets of East Oakland. As little kittens, both quickly learned to survive on their own.

Mindy created a bed for herself by circling around and around a group of tall weeds until they were flattened into a circular bed hidden among the still standing weeds. Missy was the less fearful of the two and would search for food, including approaching humans. If food was available she would go back and bring her sister out to eat. Luckily there was a kind woman living in the area who often fed them.

Mindy and Missy were trapped along with several other feral cats living in the neighborhood. Because they were kittens and had some contact with humans, Mindy and Missy had more potential for being socialized and eventually adopted.

Both were placed in a foster home. Missy adapted quickly and allowed the foster mom to pet her. Mindy purred from a distance but did not want to be touched. Both were wary of strangers.

Food and kindness eventually won Mindy over and she now seeks out pets and head rubs, purring loudly the entire time.

Both love to play with toys, especially peacock feathers.

Mindy and Missy are still shy with strangers and startle more easily, but with patience they will become affectionate companions.

– Cindy N.

B/W Sisters

contessa

Contessa is a super adorable, extra outgoing, young lady. She is affectionate and loves attention. She is so cute and loves to interact with people. She is all black except for a bit of white on her chest and a spot of white between two toes on her left back foot.

Contessa is busy and ready to engage with you for play or love. She needs another cat friend in her home and should be okay with kids over age 10. She is fostered with her friend Sugar Ray and her sister Miss Flower. We estimate she was born May 14, 2014.

miss flower

Miss Flower and Contessa are sisters. They are both very social girls and love people. They were raised with nine other kittens. Flower loves to be petted and rubs up against friendly hands any time she has access to them. Flower is an absolute sweetheart! We estimate she was born May 14, 2014. She needs another kitty in her forever home.

Room in Your Heart

Sorrow fills a barren space;
You close your eyes and see my face
And think of times I made you laugh,
The love we shared, the bond we had,
The special way I needed you –
The friendship shared by just we two.

The day’s too quiet, the world seems older,
The wind blows now a little colder.
You gaze into the empty air
And look for me, but I’m not there –
I’m in heaven and I watch you,
And I see the world around you too.

I see little souls wearing fur,
Souls who bark and souls who purr
Born unwanted and unloved –
I see all this and more above.

I watch them suffer, I see them cry,
I see them lost, I watch them die.
I see unwanted thousands born,
And when they die, nobody mourns.

These little souls wearing fur
Some who bark and some who purr,
Are castaways who – unlike me –
Will never know love or security.
A few short months they starve and roam,
Or caged in shelters, nobody takes home.
They’re special too, fur balls of pleasure,
Filled with love and each one a treasure.

My pain and suffering came to an end,
So don’t cry for me, my person, my friend.
But think of the living, those souls with fur
Some who bark and some who purr –
And though our bond can’t be broken apart,
Make room for another in your home
And your heart.

- Carol Shubert-James
Our Sincere Appreciation

Dedicated to
- Andrew Cone from Adria Amenti
- April Miles from Maria Eberstein
- Ellen Lynch from Sal Perez
- Gimmy from Anonymous
- Iggy from Joyce White
- Jake from Ming Hui Wu
- Jas Mine from Veronica Flutes-Nino
- Mozy from Brette Johnson
- Noche from Sarah Rogers
- Saidy from Anonymous

In Memory of
- Annie O’Neil from Debbie Sharp
- Our wonderful girl Bean, from Heather Hanly and Dan Purcell
- Heather and Dan's beloved cat Bean, from Merry Bates
- Ben Poe-Keesee from Debbie Sharp
- Bill Harrington from Ann Harrington and Joan, Alan, and Eric Johnson
- Bongo from Andrew and Sally Lorenz
- Boojims, Griffin, and Max from Sandra Morey
- Bubbie from Martha Woodson
- Buddy from Diane Cummings
- Cleveland and Calico from Ria Di Costanzo
- Comet from Christine Shaheen
- Casper from Stephen Fleming
- Dory Ryan from Gordon Ryan
- Erica from Dorrene Ross
- Frances from Fred Heckendor
- Nel’s dog Gordy from Linda Gibboney
- Gordy O’Neil from Debbie Sharp
- Sweet dog Gordy from Heather and Dan
- Jack and Virginia Hurtle from Candace Mathewson
- Gail Churchill’s Jacquelino, Howdy, and Fuzzy from Yvonne Temple
- Gail’s kitty Jacqueline from Heather Hanly and Dan Purcell
- from Margitta Gardner
- from Merry Bates
- from Michael Gong and Barbara Wong
- from Sandy Sher

In Honor of
- Amy Loie from Patricia Dewolk
- Annabel and Catie’s 10th Birthday from Linda Lipscomb
- Astro from M. Kahn
- Beth Summers from William Wharton
- Bodhi from Kathleen Robinson
- Boots and Gypsy from Elyse Dukatz
- Cindy Ng from Ro Leaphart
- Debbie Sharp from Barbara Jones
- Dupree and Jane from Ruthann Cohn
- Edith, the wonder calico from Alan and Linda Molyneux
- Gail Churchill for help with a feral cat from Bernadette Borsoni
- Gia from Jennifer and Christopher Dilling
- Ellen Lynch from Eveyree Sharon Kain
- Heather Hanly from Donna Hanly
- from Nancy Hart Servin
- from Stephen and Lori Taylor
- The Herron Sisters! from Anonymous
- Merry Bates and Margitta Gardner for saving two elderly cats, Sandra Sher
- from James and Manuela Hinds
- Merry Bates and Max from Cal and Kathleen Wayman
- The cats at the warehouse on Chapman Street from Richard and Susan Cochran
- Peggy Harding from Heather Nevill
- Percy from Samuel and Barbara Wong
- Susie-Blue from Barbara Anderson
- Sweetie and Lulu from Donna Jean and Steven Wood
- Willie and Molly from Linda Retta

Recycling Update – Aluminum NOT Stainless Steel-Tin

Your recycling can help cats! Locals, please bring your cleaned aluminum soda (crushed) and cat food cans (not crushed) and plastic beverage bottles (crushed) to our adoption site at Petco on Saturdays. We’ll collect them and turn them into cash to help the kittens.

> Thanks to our volunteers Pat and Ski McCall, who process all of our recycling!

We can not use stainless steel-tin cat food cans. If you can’t tell if a can is aluminum, a simple test can be done with a refrigerator magnet. If a magnet sticks to the can, it is probably steel-tin. If a magnet does not stick, it is most likely aluminum. If you still aren’t certain, use a house key to scratch the can. Because aluminum is softer than stainless steel-tin, the key will scratch aluminum but it won’t scratch the steel-tin.
We reserve the right to use your photos and comments to update the community on our work. Thank you for sharing your images, families, and stories of your ICRA kitties with all of us!

**ALFRED**
in a rare moment of idleness. “Thank you for bringing Alfred into Anya’s and my life. He has been very, very busy checking everything out - all in a good way!” Perhaps he doubts the integrity of ICRA’s home safety checklist. Adopted March 2014 by Lisa M. and Anya, Concord

**ANNIE**
You have touched the paw of regal Abyssinian greatness and I will let you live to tell the story. Now be gone from me, oh two-legged subject, as I must nap. Annie was adopted September 2013 by Victor, Beverly Hills

**BENNY + MARTY**
Benny (r) is quite the active cat tree baseball player, this scene looks much more like Marty has talked him into an extended seventh inning stretch. Adopted January 2010 by Cindy N., Alameda

**CUBBY**
Bright-eyed Cubby doesn’t have the heart to tell mom that no matter how many times she tries to sneak up on him, she will never win. Adopted September 2014 by Ann M., Greenbrae

**DOTTIE**
Supervising dinner prep from her kitchen box seat/kitty command center, Dottie would like to meet the genius who decreed that table food wasn’t good for her. Adopted June 2013 by Virginia T., Oakland

**IRIS + ROSE**
demonstrate the unpredictable duality of cats sharing a bed. One front paw draped across the neck and a rear leg poised under a chin mean one of two things: sheer contentment or a prelude to a wrestling match over space. Adopted July 2007 by Denise C., Alameda

**JETHRO**
Two words. Bad ass (in the best way possible!!). Adopted November 2010 by Stephanie T., El Cerrito

**THE DUDE**
Well, yes I am. Read it and weep. “I am SO BLESSED to have adopted a beautiful big boy of a cat named Awesome through ICRA...I just knew he had to come home with me...Thanks again to ICRA for providing me such a special boy!” Adopted March 2014 by Jessi K., Oakland

**FLYNN**
Flynn snoozes, seemingly unconcerned but undoubtedly exhausted by the inter-species rivalry for his attention that brews between Bella the dog and Beau the cat. “He is such a sweet kitten, all of us love having him around. He’s so much fun and it just cracks me up to think about how timid he was when we first met him!” Adopted June 2014 by Lauren F., El Cerrito

**BUTTERS**
makes it clear - “NO WAY, NO HOW are you getting me out of this chair! So, click that invasive device at me again and just move along.” Adopted September 2012 by Stephanie T., El Cerrito

**GABBY + BOO**
(f. Patches and Derby) Who can deny the handsomeness that is Boo? Meanwhile, Gabby fails to see the human’s attraction to this flat, stupid box - it provides no food, no toilet, no comfort, and no desired reaction when you startle it. Adopted December 2008 by Ashley L., Oakland

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**LILY + LEO**
Of stunning duo Lily and Leo, mom reports: they are “still best friends and so grateful they have allowed me to be a part of it. Thank you ICRA for allowing me to adopt them.” Adopted January 2014 by Maureen B., Alameda

**LULU**
(f. Anna) shows us the true face of unexplained shock-and-awe, kitten style! Adopted September 2014 by Jennifer F., Oakland

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**Hey, Check Us Out On Yelp!**

We have a Yelp review page at yelp.com
We are the only local rescue with 5 stars!
MIKEY
Okay. Let's go over this...again. It's empty. I stare at you in despondent desperation while the strength rushes out of my rapidly atrophying body. Fill my rapidly atrophying yet the strength rushes out of despondent desperation while it's empty. I stare at you in okay. Let's go over this...again.

MIKEY was adopted September 2014 by Megan B., Fremont

PACO
Paco (f) and his new brother demonstrate how to help your human lead a much more productive and fulfilling life. Thankless, backbreaking work really, but they manage to gut it out. Adopted July 2014 by Diane P., Woodside

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TATE
doesn’t know why he is the way he is, but the look on that face tells us that he is trying hard to be that perfect greeting card cat. Thanks, Mom, for your love and patience, letting me set the pace, and indulging me in all the pets I want. - Love, Tate

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SALEM + SABRINA
(f. Regina and Robin) - no doubt tuckered out from a full day and night of kitten romps - “are absolutely wonderful... and have already taken over the entire house”... “We really couldn’t be happier with them.” Adopted June 2014 by Jessica S., Oakland

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WALTER
reveals in the comfort of a soft, secure spot. Pure contentment. Adopted May 2014 by Flavia Cristina T., Alameda

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WILLIE + MOLLY
(f. William of Orange) and Molly (f. Pixie) - both a bit shy - are adjusting well to their new two- and four-legged family. “I’m so glad I adopted them, they bring me great joy and I hope I do the same for them.” Adopted March 2014 by Linda R., Oakland

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Bookend Best Buddies: Cody and Cassidy
Cody (left) and Cassidy were rescued near the empty Kaiser Convention Center in Oakland. They were living near a dumpster and loading dock. They were dirty, afraid and didn’t have enough to eat. They are so friendly, sweet, and outgoing now that they know humans love them. C&C love to play as well as cuddle. Cody and Cassidy adore each other and would love to be adopted as a pair or to a home with a young kitty. We estimate they were born in June of 2014. Adopt them!
Twenty years have gone by since ICRA’s inception in 1994. We are proud of our many accomplishments while remaining a local grassroots, all volunteer organization. Not a penny of your donations has gone to salaries or to the costs associated with a bricks and mortar organization. As we head into our 21st year, ICRA will continue to be involved in the rescue and adoption of cats in our community; however, our primary focus will remain spay/neuter in an effort to prevent more cats from ending up in our community animal shelters.

Regardless of our spay/neuter focus, we always have many wonderful cats awaiting homes – all types of homes; garden homes for the semi-socialized, quiet adult-only homes for the timid, homes with or without dogs, or all-around homes for the most outgoing and well-adjusted cats. We dedicate this edition of our newsletter to our adoption program in an effort to find homes for several of our (less frequently adopted) black, black and white, shy, and/or older cats this winter.

As we reach the end of our 20th anniversary year, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude to our donors. To our individual donors, know that every penny of your donations counted toward helping our community’s cats. To our veterinary partners, who include Alameda Pet Hospital, Chabot Veterinary Hospital, Berkeley Dog and Cat Hospital, East Bay SPCA Spay/Neuter Center, Fix Our Ferals Spay/Neuter Clinic, Park Center Animal Hospital, San Francisco SPCA Community Cats Program, Thornhill Pet Hospital, and VCA Bay Area Pet Hospital, your support to our programs and willingness to provide access to services at a discount is greatly appreciated. Your collective support and generosity gave us the ability to help spay or neuter 15,365 cats since 1994, to rehabilitate and find adoption homes for 3,032 cats and kittens since 1995 (the start of our adoption program), and to secure a safe place for another 1,560 cats through community shelter adoption programs through which those cats were ultimately placed into homes.

With your continued generosity, we look forward to putting your donations and support toward helping many more cats in 2015!
Happy Kitties

It's been incredibly rewarding to watch them get gradually more and more comfortable around us.

I was working in our back yard today. Ginger came by and had some wiggles. Then she sang a crooning song about her wiggles. Then she almost wiggled right off the table.

Thank you for bringing them to us.

- James S., Alameda

Garden Cat Update: Fred and Ginger

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Sachi and Boku

Their Journey

It seemed impossible. Another challenging request for help.

The woman, Yuri, stood in front of me at our Petco Adoption site. She was emotional, clearly desperate and on the verge of becoming frantic. For six years, she had fed and cared for two neighborhood cats. It seemed appropriate that she gave them Japanese names, Sachi and Boku. She was Japanese.

She pleaded with me to help her find them a new home. She was losing her home in Alameda and was moving in with her brother in another town. He would not allow the cats. Sachi and Boku had lived outdoors for their entire life. A neighbor a block away had worked on neutering and spaying what apparently had been a neighborhood cat colony. Shortly after, Boku and Sachi, just teenagers at the time, appeared on Yuri’s front porch. She began a ritual of feeding them daily. Twice a day feedings eventually graduated to also providing them a box to sleep in and additional shelter during the winter months to keep them dry and warm. Yuri bonded with them over the ensuing 6 years and them to her. She was heart-broken not to be able to keep them with her, but now her sadness had turned to desperation. Yuri had reached out to neighbors and friends and no one would give a home to Sachi and Boku.

In two short weeks, she had to move out of the house. Time was running out forcing her into the realization that she may be left with no other choice but to take them to the animal shelter.

Yuri knew that Sachi would not do well in a shelter environment, and given their middle-age, she questioned if they would make it out of the shelter alive given the high volume of cats and kittens during the high summer months.

We exchanged contact information and I encouraged Yuri to continue her efforts to find them a home through her contacts. She gave me photos and I agreed to circulate them in hope of an option – perhaps a miracle. Summer is insane for rescue groups as well as the animal shelters. We are overloaded. Never enough resources or adoptions to keep up with the need.

With only a week left before Yuri had to move, we received an inquiry from a woman looking for two garden cats. She was a friend of one of our board members. Well-informed about our garden cat program, she was agreeable to take middle-aged cats. I immediately contacted Yuri and let her know that we had a garden cat home that we could offer to Boku and Sachi. The next step was to retrieve the cats from Yuri and have them seen by a veterinarian before relocating them to their new garden home.

Fast-forward two months:

Sachi is a bold striped, brown tabby with a sweet, soft-hearted personality. Timid with new people, but an affectionate marshmallow once he bonds with his people. Boku is a soft grey tabby with white that gives added character to his big personality and outgoing nature. Both are stunningly handsome cats.

Their new garden home did not materialize when it was determined that both cats needed extensive dental surgery with a period of time to recover and it was clear that Sachi and Boku are well-socialized to people.

They are now in excellent health, but given their age and bond to people, we decided that they needed to live out their lives INSIDE a home. So, Sachi and Boku’s journey to find a new home continues. For now, they remain safe and warm in a foster home.

Might you consider giving Sachi and Boku a loving home?

- Merry B.

Editor’s note: We did place two other cats at that garden home – we always have a waiting list of semi-feral cats that need a garden or safe yard with a committed guardian.
A black beauty without a doubt, Elle, is a sweet young kitty. She will roll into a tight curl with obvious delight when being petted. Elle is timid but do not let her initial shyness fool you. She is full of love and playfulness once she is comfortable. Elle is quite athletic and can jump and do amazing flips when chasing interactive toys. She makes it look effortless! Elle was rescued with her brothers as feral kittens in the Fruitvale neighborhood in Oakland along with their mom in January 2013. She would do best in a home with another cat to be her buddy and/or perhaps a cat-friendly and calm dog who likes to snuggle with a kitty. Elle will start out shy in a new home so will need a patient family to help him transition and settle in. For that reason, she would do best in an adult, quieter home environment. Estimated date of birth is mid-Nov 2012.