Challenges and Surprises in the World of TNR

Jack and Kim are very special people who have been caring for a community of free-roaming cats for many years on a local college campus. The epitome of kindness and selflessness, this duo not only knows every cat or kitten in this little colony but also has named each one of them. Having built a trusting relationship with these cats, Jack and Kim are acutely aware of changes in the group dynamic, including signs of injury or illness and the arrival of new whiskered faces. Sadly, it is thoughtless people who abandon many of the “new” cats who show up in existing feral colonies, left to fend for themselves among their own kind.

Every year ICRA receives dozens of calls for help with stray and abandoned cats. Last spring one of them came from Jack and Kim. We had worked with them before to spay and neuter the campus cats, but a new batch in the mix meant that they needed our help again.

We assumed that this project would be a routine one involving feral cats trap-neuter-return (TNR). We were able to trap Mimi on the first day – she was pregnant and notably scared. Then came Seamus, a big orange tabby who had been abandoned three years earlier. Leon was the third cat trapped — we definitely thought he was feral based upon his initial behavior. And just when we thought we had them all, a young cat with a severely infected eye appeared, half starved and alone. This was Jack.

While evaluating these four cats it was readily apparent that they were anything but feral. Like so many, they most likely were abandoned pets, each bearing different scars of physical or emotional trauma from their experiences. Ratchet up the all too familiar pressure of finding the right foster homes to nurture and prepare cats and kittens with special needs and behavioral issues for permanent adoption! The process is never easy and can be fraught with setbacks. Cats who are exceptionally shy, older, black, or deemed “imperfect” in some way are often the first to be overlooked and the last to be adopted. Some remain in foster care for years waiting for a family to call their own – for the last time. Anyone who knows ICRA also knows that we will stick with these cats for as long as it takes to find homes that will allow them to flourish. These beautiful souls deserve at least that much from us.

Thanks to caring people like Jack and Kim who were proactive in engaging ICRA, all four of the campus cats have won a second chance for a happy, healthy life.

After months in foster care, 11-year-old Seamus found his forever home with a wonderful two- and four-legged family in Piedmont. We hope you enjoy reading the update from his people on page 3.

While Jack’s infected eye had to be removed, he quickly blossomed into a bundle of energy and was adopted within a few weeks in a clear case of love at first sight. We invite you to read Kelsey’s account of her new life with Jack, who now likes to be called Finnegan.

Sweet but shy Mimi, with her crossed eyes and polydactyl (six-toed) feet, finally found a very patient and nurturing home with Anne R. and her Oakland Animal Shelter alum Madeline.

His college days behind him, handsome Leon also found a shy-cat-savvy home with Kim and Suzanne M. in Oakland.

As a happy footnote to this rescue story, Jack and Kim (and their cat Brownie) are now the proud guardians of Nikki, a tuxedo kitten who was trapped shortly after Jack.

This is only one among hundreds of projects that our volunteers are involved with every day. With your continued support we can keep helping cats like Seamus, Jack, Mimi, Leon, and Nikki. Thank you for your generous gifts year after year which directly help us create happy endings for our feline population in need.
**Finnegan and Kelsey: Soulmates**

I was not searching for a cat when I came across Jack. I was out shopping with my roommate when we went into Petco just to look at the cats. But when I laid eyes on Jack (now lovingly known as Finnegan), I knew I had to have him. He looked out of his cage at me with his one striking blue eye. As the ICRA volunteers talked him up – stressing how he was just like any other cat – I barely listened because I only had eyes for little Finnegan. His missing eye was no bother to me.

When I adopted him days later, he spent the first night under the bed. The following day he wedged himself under my rat’s cage, but I eventually lured him out with his favorite wand toy. Building trust was slow at first, but as I played with and handled Finnegan daily he began to come around. He began sleeping next to the rat cage but not coming onto “my” side of the bedroom. He then grew comfortable enough to sleep in the bed I bought him.

Eventually he worked up the courage to sleep in bed with me, but at my feet. Now he trusts me enough to snuggle up close.

It’s such a joy to see his personality come out more and more each and every day. He remains skittish but loves to snuggle on the couch and play with his cat buddy, Buster. Finnegan purrs when I walk through the door after work, and he likes to have dinner with me. Having one eye does not stop him from being a normal, young and energetic cat. There is no indication that having one eye limits his abilities.

To me, he is perfect. I sometimes forget he only has one eye because, to me, he is just my cat. I know most people would pass over him because of his “disability,” but I looked right past that and am so thankful every day that Finn is in my life.

There really is some truth in the saying that the animals we rescue save us more than we save them.

– Kelsey S., Oakland

**In Our Supporters We Trust**

Please remember cats in need when you prepare your will or trust. Your support is crucial to them. Your lasting gift to help cats will create an enduring legacy of your generosity which will save lives and help end suffering.* We thank you!

To be certain that your donations in trust are carried out according to your wishes, be sure to include our federal EIN ID number 94-3225519, with our name, Island Cat Resources and Adoption (ICRA). For more information, please contact Debbie Sharp at debbie@icraeastbay.org

ICRA was established in 1994 and we are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Since 1994, ICRA has spayed or neutered over 16,000 cats, found homes for over 3,000 cats, and assisted in getting many hundreds more off the streets and into “no-kill” community shelters.

*ICRA is not able to take and care for surviving pets as a condition of a financial gift.

**Humanely trapped and on to the vet to treat his infected eye**

**Resting after eye removal surgery**
ALBERT, CHARLES + HENRY
Littermates Charles, Albert and Henry (f. Moe, Curly and Larry) are happy as three peas in a pod. They were so lucky to find a forever home together. Adopted January 2014 by Steve F., Emeryville.

FLYNN
It is a scientific fact that a large cat and any grossly undersized container = a magnetic match made in heaven! Why should handsome Flynn (f. Crawley) buck the trend? Adopted June 2014 by Lauren F., El Cerrito.

AUSTIN + AMANDA
Austin is more than happy to let new friend and self-appointed personal stylist Amanda (former feral turned indoor cat) give him a little touch-up behind the ears. Adopted January 2016 by Judy B., Berkeley.

GENTLE BEN
Gentle Ben demonstrates the grueling warm-down regimen he puts himself through after what his guardians refer to as his ‘crazy cat mode.’ Of their big boy, mom and dad say: “We love him so much and can’t imagine life with out him.” Okay, just for that I’ll let that ‘crazy’ comment slide. Love, Gentle Ben. Adopted July 2012 by Susie and Ryan G., Alameda.

BUSTER + POSEY
Way to lose your composure when the camera’s pointed our way, Posey! Of Buster and Posey, their mom reports that “They’re still are a bonded pair. John and I love them so much. Thanks again for giving them such a good early start in life.” Adopted December 2015 by Marion and John C., Albany.

GINGER + ANNABELLE
Can they see us? I think they can see us. Ginger (f. Dagmar, left) and Annabelle (f. Astrid) lament the unfortunate limitations of their stunning camouflage … foiled yet again by the banality of the clean interior aesthetic humans seem to love so much. Adopted December 2014 by Jeff and Liana T., Alameda.

HODGES
Phew! Keeping my human on point is exhausting, but now I’m feee-line FINE! According to mom, “Hodges is purrfect…He’s slept with me in bed every night, he wakes me up every morning at 6:30 for breakfast, he is very (VERY) talkative, and has decided that he’s my shadow… I don’t think I’ve ever met a cat who was so insistent on constant physical contact…It’s like we’ve always been together.”
Adopted August 2016 by Sarah W., Alameda.

KATY
Katy (f. Brixie), upon learning that big sister cat Penny thinks she’s a ‘total brat,’ poses the question, ‘Seriously, do I LOOK like I’m gonna change any time soon?’ Adopted March 2016 by Lori H., Alameda.

HODGES
Loki (f. Odin) thinks, “Uh-oh. Big fail! According to fellow alum Flynn, this danged box is WAY too big for me.” Adopted December 2014 by Wes and Melissa N., Oakland.

MISAI
Burt loves keeping company with new sister Misai (front) but wonders deep down inside whether those crazy little eyes don’t portend a radical long-term shift in his comfortable routine. Adopted March 2016 by Caley and Jeff S., Alameda.

MOPPET
Gorgeous Moppet (f. Tina) “is doing great,” according to her family of six years. Whatever lingering fears she may have of strangers and doorbells, they don’t carry over to HER people. “She loves to sleep on our lap, on our laptop, on our iPad, at the dinner table…anywhere we happen to be…She really is a wonderful, sweet cat who is greatly loved by me and my husband.” Adopted April 2010 by Heather G., Lafayette.
RALEIGH
Mom has the audacity to call me out as a ‘big couch potato.’ Yet hear I sit... day after day... waiting for her to present me with the remote control or computer mouse. A little nosh might be nice. Humans. So much potential... (Sigh). Raleigh (f. Sweets) knows that his work here is just beginning. Adopted July 2014 by Teresa W., Alameda.

SEAL
Seal finds it almost laughable that the human might be entertaining the silly idea of actually using ‘her’ shoes. Surely she knows how things are going to work around here by NOW? Well, in fact, mom admits that Seal “doesn’t hesitate to mention my shortcomings... Friends come to visit him and let me hang around to make the tea. I truly treasure Seal.” Adopted August 2015 by Rowena T., San Francisco.

SACHIKO
We understand that little cutie Sachiko (f. Gigi) has charmed the pants off of her new big brother. Her family happily reports, “It’s really adorable and she has worked out to be a wonderful addition to our little family.” Adopted August 2016 by Angelique H., Alameda.

WILEY
Whoa! Where’s the fire? Wiley (f. Wylie) schools us all on priorities and how to ease gracefully into another action-packed day after enjoying a big ol’ nap. Adopted July 2015 by Owen and Rachel W., Berkeley.

STELLA + LUNA
Luna (f. Tiny - left) shows how she and sister Stella train their canine, Penny, to be the perfect heated cat bed.
According to their mom, Luna and Stella (f. Purry - above) also love spending time atop the fish tank, no doubt relaying words of encouragement (?) to their little swimming friends.
“It’s very cute...Penny seems to enjoy her new friends’ attentions,” says mom. Fearing retribution, Penny and the fish declined to comment. Adopted February 2016 by Regina F., Castro Valley.

ZACK and ZULI
It seems that Zack (leaning belly-up) isn’t quite the party animal he thought he was. Lucky for him, he has sister Zuli to lean on when times get tough. Adopted July 2016 by Merilee F., Alameda.

I have NO earthly idea why I’m not already part of your family!? What gives, y’all? I’m everything you could ever want in a cat – affectionate, bubbly, gentle yet charmingly frisky, playful – and I LOVE people. If you are seeking instant purry, furry friend, I’m your girl. If you want your fill of wet nose kisses, they’re on me! Other animals? - I can take ‘em or leave ‘em because all I really want is you and all of the attention you are willing to shower upon me.

Estimated date of birth: 2009

Adopt Jet
**Wi-llowwwww.** The name flows as smoothly off the tongue as I want to flow into your heart. Everything about me is demure, from my elegantly muted calico coat to my sweet and playful demeanor. I am a bit shy with new people, but there’s nothing like a good romp with a nice human at the other end of an interactive wand toy to help build my confidence. As my revolving door of foster friends will tell you, I get along very well with other cats – even those much less gracious and refined than I. If you have a patient and loving household with just enough space for a new gentle companion, please give me a chance to fill that void.

*Estimated date of birth: Late 2014*

**Adopt Willow**
Grateful for Your Donations

In Honor of
• Annabel and Catie Birthdays from Linda Lipscomb
• Barbara Gaskill from Carolyn Teets
• Bodhi from Kathleen Robinson
• Debbie Sharp from Barbara Jones
• Dr. Vanessa Wensing from Patricia Barker
• Fiona from Toni Walker
• Gail Churchill from Dennis and Cindy Hopken
• Kara from Ruthann Cohn
• Kim and Jack, guardians of the college cats, from Peggy Harding
• Lydia N. Chapman, my daughter, from Barbara Newell
• Martha Jimenez and David Ostro – Thank you for giving us a chance from Puma and Kono

In Memory of
• Baby Kitty and Tiny Dancer from Lani Knowlton
• Bingeaux Preston Lorenz from Sally and Andy Lorenz
• Bob Gordon, a great animal lover, from Sandy Sher
• Camper (Happy Camper Van Beethoven) from Peter Andrea
• Chuck from Michael Wood
• Donna Rea Hanly - from Brian and Cathleen Hall - from Diana and Dylan Carter - from Gail Churchill - from James and Jean McNamara - from Katina Ancar - from Matthew and Heather Speckhard - from Peggy Harding - from Sallee Purcell and John Murray - from Sandra Sher

Don’t let the fiery orange coat fool you. I’m really a very easy going and quiet guy who prefers quality one-on-one people time to racing around with one of my own. There’s nothing I like better than to kick back and relax on a nice window perch or on what will be forever known to you as MY couch. Watching people, squirrels, and birds are favorite pastimes, just so you know. If I had my way, I’d be the center of your world. YOU – paying attention to ME. That’s not to say I don’t get along with other cats, because I do, but I’d prefer a lady cat friend if at all possible. I might be persuaded to carve out some space in my life for a calm human child or dog.

Estimated date of birth: May 2013

ADOPT
Ernie

The festive blaze on my nose says it all! I fancy myself a fun spirit, and those who know me best say I’m an affectionate girl, albeit shy until I get to know my new environment. All I really need is a chance to settle in and understand how things run...so I can tell you how to do it better. I’m a calico, so keeping close tabs on your daily activities is in my DNA. If I do say so myself, I would be a lovely (and I do mean LOVELY) addition to any calm, cat-friendly home that needs a supervisor – uhhh – I mean companion.

Estimated date of birth: June 2015

ADOPT
Petunia

The festive blaze on my nose says it all! I fancy myself a fun spirit, and those who know me best say I’m an affectionate girl, albeit shy until I get to know my new environment. All I really need is a chance to settle in and understand how things run...so I can tell you how to do it better. I’m a calico, so keeping close tabs on your daily activities is in my DNA. If I do say so myself, I would be a lovely (and I do mean LOVELY) addition to any calm, cat-friendly home that needs a supervisor – uhhh – I mean companion.

Estimated date of birth: June 2015
Seamus: They Had Me at Belly Rub

When our 16-year-old cat died of throat cancer, it took the family about eight months to grieve. I rescued Zeke at four months, and he was the only cat my kids had known. When we were ready for a new cat, my twin daughters and I began a search for two older cats needing homes. We knew kittens and younger cats had an easier time getting adopted, so we wanted to help a pair that truly needed help.

After searching online and visiting many shelters, we adopted 8-year-old Henry. Our family did not feel complete so I reached out to ICRA, a group I had known about for years. I was immediately put in contact with a foster parent who introduced me to Seamus at her home. He was perfect, and a few days later he came to our house.

I wasn’t sure how he would get along with Henry or my twin 9-year-olds who were away at camp, but ICRA was very supportive of letting us try.

We kept Seamus in a small room, allowing him additional freedom as he became comfortable. We slowly introduced him to Henry. There were a few days, – okay, a few weeks – of hissing and anxiety, but I knew it could take 30-60 days for them to really adjust to one another so I didn’t worry.

Slowly, Seamus became more and more comfortable, exploring all parts of the house. He’d retreat to his own room when he got nervous, but before we knew it he was watching TV with us at night, sleeping in our bed, and talking up a storm to anyone who would listen. He and Henry now sleep next to each other and tear around the house like a couple of kittens.

Seamus is so sweet and just the right cat for us. He just wants to hang out, get belly rubs, and look out the window. He greets us when we get home and loves to sleep between my husband (his new BFF) and me every evening. Even my son, who was never too interested in Zeke, loves scratching Seamus on the chin and lets him walk all over him. We are so grateful to ICRA and foster mom Peggy for getting Seamus off the streets and giving him a chance to find his true forever home.

I’m so happy he found it with us.


If you ask me, I’m just about perfect. Okay, so I’m a bit shy at first. But let’s just call it my little way of keeping people off balance (a cat’s prerogative!) until I deem them worthy of seeing the full ‘Tortie’ purr-sonality lurking just below the surface of my stunning coat.

I’m a curious and playful girl but generally will spare my two- and four-legged family full-throttle, 24/7 romps. Calm and steady is what I prefer. How about YOU?

Estimated date of birth: July 2015

ADOPT

Twiggy
Thank You – Our Dedicated Veterinary Partners!

ICRA often rescues cats and kittens who need immediate veterinary attention for injuries, infections, or signs of generally poor health. Even if they don't require urgent care, all of our cats need to be spayed or neutered and tested for diseases, such as Feline Leukemia (FeLV) and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV), before they are ready for adoption. As we take a (very) short breather during the holidays with another busy kitten season behind us, we would like to take this opportunity to give a well-deserved “shout out” and THANK YOU to the following veterinary partners who always go above and beyond to lend a hand when we need it most.

**Alameda Pet Hospital**
consistently provides responsive and expert care to our rescues. Often on a moment’s notice, they accommodate us when cats and kittens with a myriad of issues are in crisis. Thank you to Drs. Buchinger, Harris, Granzow and Wagner for continuing to play such an integral role in the work we do every day on behalf of these animals!

**VCA Bay Area Hospital**
of Oakland also delivers on a host of medical care services and spay-neuter surgeries for ICRA. We cannot thank the doctors on staff enough for fitting us into their already hectic schedules.

**Dr. Monica Rudiger** at Nine Lives Foundation
in Redwood City — you are one of our newest heroes for performing so many safe, efficient and low-cost spay-neuter surgeries and medical procedures on our cats and kittens that help keep our heads above water, especially when demand for these services is sky high.

As you can imagine, the volume of community requests we receive for spay-neuter assistance throughout the year drives us to seek out as many veterinary resources and options as possible. In addition to those already mentioned, we extend our heartfelt thanks to the doctors and staff at

**Thornhill Veterinary Hospital** in Oakland,
**Park Centre Veterinary Hospital** in Alameda,
**Chabot Vet Clinic** in Hayward,
and the **East Bay SPCA**. Countless homeless cats and kittens get a second chance because of the great work you do on their behalf.

ICRA is proud and grateful to have these dedicated professionals in our corner year after year. Without their support, we lose a vital link in the process of transitioning so many precious and deserving creatures from lives replete with human neglect and indifference to happy, healthy ones in new ‘furever’ homes - be they indoors, in home garden sanctuaries, or in managed colonies under the watchful eyes of caretakers.

As for me, **Pete (left)**, I stand by my reputation as a sweet, playful and eager guy. I’m shy with new people but a total flirt with those I let into my circle of trust. In fact, should you act too slowly in showering me with pets, I will roll about and turn on the purr motor to make myself simply irresistible. I’m also a pretty good lap cat, a quality that seems to be rubbing off on Scrappy Doo little by little. **Estimated date of birth: August 2015**

**Scrappy Doo**
, I am a bit of a handsome flirt with the people I learn to trust. In fact, I’m perfectly willing to let my guard down for the chance to weave and rub against your legs (dark clothes always recommended for this activity so you can fully appreciate the colorful gift I will bestow upon you!). And if that’s not enough, I’ll dazzle you with my ability to pop up on my hind legs to nuzzle my snout into your grateful hand. I also enjoy chasing and wrestling with Pete to the point of exhaustion. **Estimated date of birth: July 2015**

ADOPT THEM

PETE and SCRAPPY

ADOPT THEM

ninelivesfoundation.org
3137 Jefferson Avenue, Redwood City
Call (650) 368-1365 for more info
low cost spay/neuter

As for me, **PETE (left)**, I stand by my reputation as a sweet, playful and eager guy. I’m shy with new people but a total flirt with those I let into my circle of trust. In fact, should you act too slowly in showering me with pets, I will roll about and turn on the purr motor to make myself simply irresistible. I’m also a pretty good lap cat, a quality that seems to be rubbing off on Scrappy Doo little by little. **Estimated date of birth: August 2015**

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