



The Little Guild of St. Francis

Newsletter

March 2007

The Nice Auntie in the Kitty Room

Diane Monroe

We can't thank our volunteers enough. As a matter of fact, we don't know what life at The Little Guild would be like without them. People have been volunteering since our doors opened 50 years ago.

If the cats could put together a scrap book, there would be one face

that would show up on many pages. **Jane Prokop** (we're sure the kittens call her Auntie Jane) has been giving her gentle ways and time to The Little Guild every Saturday for 10 years. The staff loves her because she's here like clockwork: Her coat is barely hung up as she rolls up her sleeves and hits the washing machine with a load of towels and blankets after which her well experienced hands dive into the sink to wash the deluge of stainless steel dishes that have mounted up. After washing and drying the dishes, she places the laundry into the dryer



and puts in another load to wash. She masterfully folds up the warm dried towels and blankets and, knowing her, probably takes one with her to put on her lap as she sits in one of the cat lounging rooms.

Often times you'll walk by and she'll be just sitting with that reassuring presence of the kind Aunt. She expects nothing from the cats and they all love her. The timid ones come out and sniff and relearn that life with humans can be nice. The clowns show off for her and the snugglers find her lap. If a kitty is sleeping, she sits there, even when the buzzer on the dryer goes off.

Along with her husband Al, the Prokops are loyal people with great big hearts that they share with our animals regularly. They enjoy three cats of their own, but our Little Guild kitties are no doubt like Jane's little nieces and nephews. We should all be so lucky.

If our cats could talk, we're sure they'd be asking for Auntie Jane.

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A Note from the Director

This is our annual issue in which we recognize our supporters and thank those who have helped us to make 2006 another great year for The Little Guild. I'm humbled as I review the list of donors who have given from their heart for the care of our homeless cats and dogs. The cover story is about one of the many people who help us make our mission possible. We also recognize those pets and people who, although they are no longer with us, will always have a place in our hearts. The letter in our "People and Pet Mail" section is one of many stories that I hear each year which makes me so sure that helping these cats and dogs is not only the right thing to do for them, but very, very good for us! All too often we do not get a lot of good news, however this issue is a testament to the generosity, compassion and personal values of the people of our community. So, on behalf of all of us at The Little Guild, including the hundreds of cats and dogs you have helped this past year, I say Thank You! You have reached beyond yourselves to make a difference and I hope that each of you finds the peace and joy that these wonderful pets bring.

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President's Message

When does one cat result in 34,000 cats?

When it is an unspayed female. Let me lead you through some numbers. A cat can have up to three litters per year of as many as nine or ten kittens each time.

If we project this growth, using conservative numbers of 2 litters per year of 6 kittens each, only half of which are female, the growth at the end of five years is almost 34,000 cats.

The American Humane Society has put together much more startling numbers which show that over a 10 year period, using much more conservative numbers of 2.8 female kittens per litter, the result is over **80 million cats**.

The growth is exponential since each cat continues breeding at the same rate. That is why at The Little Guild, no cat (or dog) is rehomed without first being spayed or neutered. We, however, cannot control the feral cat population, which are the undomesticated cats roaming in our woods or living outdoors close to developed areas where kind people feed them. Unfortunately their lives are usually short and difficult but they do breed leading to a cat overpopulation problem.

The problem even exists with domesticated cats, where various studies have shown that close to 20% of them have litters before they are spayed. This means that at the end of five years we would again have over 6,000 cats, many abandoned, from these domesticated cats..

This is the reason we urge all cat owners to spay and neuter their cats to protect against overpopulation.

Published by The Little Guild of
Saint Francis
for the Welfare of Animals, Inc.
West Cornwall, Ct. 06796
(860) 672-6346
www.littleguild.org
Editor: Jim Lussier
Writer: Diane Monroe
Printing: Moore & More Printing

People and Pet Mail

*Hansel, Gretel, and Missy, are three cats who found a wonderful home after spending a year at The Little Guild. When these cats arrived at our shelter, they were so shy, that most of the time, we could never find them in the cat room. They were very good at hiding. It did not surprise us that most of the shelter's visitors were not interested in adopting three cats that were very timid and scared. So, we came to accept that Hansel, Gretel and Missy would be staying with us for a long time. Well, one day that all changed, when **Janice and Chris Boults** came to the shelter, looking for a cat. They liked Missy, who was not as shy as Hansel and Gretel. To our amazement, they wanted to give Hansel and Gretel (siblings) a home too, along with Missy. We all knew that there was a possibility this might not work, and getting the timid cats into carriers on the day of the adoption was a feat in itself. In December, we received this letter from the Boults, which brought tears of joy to our eyes. The following words are proof that there is always hope for animals like Hansel, Gretel, and Missy here at the Guild. It shows us that if we are patient, there is an extraordinary person out there who will find the path that leads to our special animals.*



Hansel

Dear Little Guild,

Adopting these three cats last February of 2006 was the most gratifying, humbling, and life-saving experience we have ever had. Joy and happiness abound in our home – alive with three healthy, gorgeous cats. Gently easing them into our home and lifestyle was a calming time for all of us, adjusting to all that is new, not just for the cats, but for us as well. We feel that in some respects, these cats saved our lives. Having lost our cat of 16 years last Christmas was a devastating blow, and the grief and slow recovery from that loss was agonizing. The presence of our new cats brought us through that process and helped us to open our hearts again. We are hopelessly in love, our home totally run by cats we love to spoil and we enjoy every minute with them. Missy is our “Queen,” and adores Chris. Gretel Grace, although she came to us as somewhat wild and possibly suited for a barn, she is now an extreme love bug and cannot get enough petting and snuggling. Hansel Klaus is our lion King, and an all around goof ball, who just loves everyone.



Gretel

All three cats get along and race around the house at times, kicking up their heels – we know they are truly happy cats living in their own home. (continued on page 9)

THE LITTLE GUILD OF ST FRANCIS DONORS

January - December 2006

On behalf of the Board of Directors and all the dogs and cats you have helped, we would like to thank you for your support of our shelter. You have made it possible for us to help these beautiful animals that have found themselves homeless through no fault of their own. Please know that we are very grateful for your support.

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People and Pet Mail

(continued from page 3)

Overall, they are great cats, robust, and full of energy and lots of love and gratitude – yes, gratitude – it is evident that these cats know we changed their lives by adopting them. The love we have gotten in return for such an adoption is overwhelming. Our experience with The Little Guild was heartwarming, taking in needy animals is life changing, and adopting Hansel, Gretel, and Missy, was the greatest gift we have ever given ourselves!

Sincerely,

*Janice & Chris Boults
 Southfield, MA*



Missy

In Memory of People

October 2006 through February 2007

Isabella Heart Baldwin
Dr. Richard Berlin
Cynthia G. Blackwell
Kathy Bossone
Missy Breen
Margaret Dahlen Campbell
Rose DePippo
Albert Dimeo
Joseph Drouin
Joan Ernst
Muriel Erwin
Vilma Flaherty
Helen M. Foley

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Joe Lush
Helen Marshall
Lynn O'Brien

Dorothy Pescler
Andy Rakyta
Pauline Robert
Jack Sage
Richard Seeley
William "Mr. Bill" Sellars
Patricia Shuhi
Paul M. Smith
Theresa Smith
Barbara Tieman
Frank Trager
John Walsh
Glen Williams

In Memory of Pets

October 2006 through February 2007

Ace
Barbaro
Bear
Bell & Rocky
Benji & Spooky
Bettyboop & Angus
Boo Boo, Josie & Jake
Buddy
Tessa Byam
Chip Lynn & Oreo
Cuffy
Daisy May
Doc
Dodger
Duster
Dusty
Fritz
Ginger
Henry
Hermie
Isabella

Cisco
Riley
Sally
Norton
Cecil
Keila
Jeb
Judy
Keson
Kitty
Krema
Kurtis
Lizzy
Lucky
Lucy & Mikos
LuLu
Maggie
Max & Smokey
Max, Lucy & Lukas
Mickey Mouse & Bidder Girl
Miss Maggie Mouse Woman

Molly
Monster
Poquita, Lady & Duffy
Rita
Sara & Molly
Scottie
Felix
Hobbes
Carlyle
Shadow
Skittles
Thomas "C" Larson
Thomas & Handsome Cat
Tiggy-Cat
Venus
Holly
Teddy
Larry
Willie & Misty

JOIN THE MONTHLY PLEDGE CLUB

Have you make a New Year's resolution to help animals? You might want to consider becoming a member of our "Monthly Pledge Club" program. Other generous animal lovers are already part of the Little Guild monthly giving program and their support is life-saving.

Here are some commonly asked questions.

How does my monthly pledge help more than my regular contribution?

We can depend on your monthly gifts! When we receive your donation every month, we'll know we have enough money to provide food, medicine, veterinary care and shelter for our animal friends.

How does the pledge program work?

We'll send you a monthly statement that shows the amount you have pledged. Just send a check with the return form in the envelope we will provide.

How much should I pledge?

We suggest a pledge of \$10 to \$25 or more – or whatever you can manage.

Can I make my contribution larger than usual once in a while?

Sure! You can make an extra gift at any time that will be credited to you. We'll be very grateful and so will the animals.

What happens if I have to Cancel my pledge?

You can cancel your pledge at any time. If your situation changes, you can reduce or increase the amount of your pledge.

Please Join the Little Guild Monthly Pledge Club

Check the "Send me a monthly reminder" box below and return to us. Thank You!

Our Dream of No More Homeless Pets

Caring for animals is expensive. Without your donations, the shelter and the work we do is at risk. Please indicate your commitment for 2007!

YES, I want to be part of the work of The Little Guild. Here is my 2007 contribution.

\$45 Member

\$100 Caregiver

\$180 Supporter

\$240 Champion Other \$ _____

I'd prefer to send a monthly membership donation of \$ _____ .

Send me a monthly reminder.

Many companies offer a matching gift program that doubles the value of your gift to The Little Guild. Please ask your Human Resources representative for a form, complete it, and send it along with your gift today. Thank You!

Donations are tax-deductible under section 501 (c)(3) of IRS code. Notification of your donation will be mailed to you.

Please Mail to:

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