



ANNEX CAT RESCUE ANNUAL HIGHLIGHTS 2007



YEAR: January - December 2007
RELEASED: June 2008

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your continued support of the Annex Cat Rescue. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of so many wonderful volunteers, members, donors and the communities we work in, we are really making a difference. Over the past year, we have rescued and placed 152 precious kittens and cats into loving forever homes. We have prevented thousands of unwanted kittens from being born on the streets through our vigilant Trap-Neuter-Return program. And thanks to the work of our feeders, these cats will be cared for for life.

It has been my pleasure to serve as Chair of the Annex Cat Rescue for the past year. During my tenure, I have seen many positive changes, have met many new volunteers and said goodbye to many wonderful volunteers. I would like to make special mention of Isabelle Hemond, Carol Hroncek and Jewel Hamilton, who all served the Board of Directors and have since moved on. On behalf of the Board, we wish Isabelle, Carol and Jewel all the best in the future.

I would like to end my message, my year and my time as Chair by thanking everyone who supports us – we would not be able to do the wonderful work and save so many cats without you. From the bottom of my heart – thank you.

Sincerely,

Sharon

Sharon Steinman
Chair,
Annex Cat Rescue

ABOUT THE ANNEX CAT RESCUE

Our Goals

The plight of homeless cats in the Greater Toronto Area is a growing one in search of a compassionate solution. The Annex Cat Rescue is an all-volunteer charity which deals with this sad problem in five ways:

- **by humanely trapping homeless kittens and abandoned or stray adults for our foster and adoption program;**
- **by feeding and providing medical care for feral cats in designated colonies;**
- **by curbing population growth in those colonies through trapping, then spaying/neutering and vaccinating these cats;**
- **by educating the public on the compassionate treatment of homeless cats and responsible pet ownership;**
- **by improving urban environments through community collaboration.**

Our Programs

Currently, ACR has over 60 core volunteers including foster parents, adoption screeners, photographers, feral-cat trappers, colony feeders, craft makers, administrators, financial officers, event organizers and fundraisers.

We do not operate a shelter. All our cats are fostered in a network of volunteers' homes, preventing the behavioural problems that develop when cats are caged for long periods as well as the spread of infectious disease. The foster home environment also makes it easier for our foster care providers to socialize nervous cats and to better understand their temperaments, thereby ensuring that they are placed with the most suitable families. Through home visits, prospective adopters are able to interact directly with our cats in a setting similar to their own. That's why ACR describes itself as "Adoption with a Difference."

In the eleven years since our founding, ACR has placed over 2000 cats and kittens in permanent homes. Those six months or older are spayed or neutered. All adopters of kittens must sign contracts agreeing to spay or neuter them at the appropriate time.

Feral cats are the wild offspring of domestic cats that have been abandoned or have become lost. They may have been wild for several generations and tend to live in colonies in back alleys, parks, garages or wherever they can find shelter and food. The ACR believes that all cats deserve humane and compassionate care. Our volunteers continue to feed feral ACR cats in the colonies where we are spaying and neutering them. These volunteers also report colony cats with medical needs to our trappers for veterinary attention. The ACR has a strict no-kill policy and only euthanizes cats on purely compassionate grounds.

Since a female cat can have two or three litters a year, she can exponentially produce thousands of offspring in a short time, many of whom will perish through starvation, freezing, attacks by humans and other predators. The ACR intervenes in this tragic cycle of suffering through our trap-spay/neuter-return program (TNR). In the last few years, the reach of this program has been greatly extended.

ACR's funds are raised by our volunteers through membership fees, adoption fees, donations, gift cards and money from the sale of our handmade crafts. Our foster parents generously cover the cost of food, litter and toys for the cats that are in their care. Our volunteer feeders pay for most of the food they distribute to ACR colonies. On occasion we have received donations of food from local clinics, pet stores and pet food companies. This food is disbursed throughout the feral feeding program and sometimes to foster homes.

Our History

The ACR was founded in 1997 when residents of The Annex neighbourhood in downtown Toronto banded together to care for a local colony. Gradually our service area, both for cats and volunteers, has spread across the GTA.

In 1999, Canada Revenue Agency granted ACR charitable status (#871653945 RR 0001). A Board of Directors was chosen and a philosophy was formalized through our constitution, by-laws and guidelines.

Recent ACR Board activities have continued the work of our founders by clarifying responsibilities and procedures through the creation of an official Privacy Policy for the Annex Cat Rescue, which will be posted on the ACR website, an Owner's Foster Agreement (to assist people who are looking for help in finding new homes for their pets), and a Bequest Fund.

We are now testing cats for Feline Leukemia (FeLV) and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) before placing them into our foster homes to support the increased needs of adopters who have been specifically requesting to know the outcome of the results.

The Board has also set up a program for people who are interested in bequeathing money and their cats in the care of the organization, to utilize our skills at finding permanent and caring placements for their pets if necessary. This will allow ACR to set up an endowment fund that will allow your pets to be cared for and to give ACR much-needed sustainability to continue our work for generations to come.

Our Future

As the ACR approaches its 11th year, the focus for ACR is to develop an ongoing strategy to continue our work within communities and to stabilize future funding.

ACR Board of Directors June '07 - June '08

Sharon Ritchie-Steinman	Chairperson	1st year of her 2nd term
Lisa Doucette	Vice-Chairperson	2nd year of her 1st term
Morgan MacDougall	Co-Treasurer	1st year of her 1st term
Matthew Duncan	Co-Treasurer	1st year of his 1st term
Sara Slater	Member at Large /acting Secretary	1st year of her 1st term
Jewel Hamilton	Secretary Board appointment	(Nov 2007 to June 1st)



HIGHLIGHTS OF 2007

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

Special Events:

We would like to thank Jessica Hopkins for her great job as Special Events Coordinator. She did a wonderful job organizing the events and coordinating volunteers for over four years. She is still staying on as the transportation coordinator. We are currently looking for someone to fill the Special Events Coordinator role.

Adoption Screeners:

Adoption screening is one of the toughest volunteer roles in the agency. It means being very thorough in asking questions to potential adopters, as well as turning nice people down if not suitable. All adoption screeners deserve a big pat on the back for keeping adoptions going. There is a shortage of adoption screeners for next year, so if anyone can help by making even one call per week, it would be a huge relief for the large amounts of calls our foster/adoption coordinator is doing every week.

Feral Feeders:

Our feral feeders braved a particularly harsh winter making sure the feral cats stayed well fed. A big thanks goes out to them. Cary McBay is our new coordinator of the Kensington feeding route, and is doing a great job updating the route. Some of the long term feeders on both the Kensington and Chinatown routes have retired after lengthy careers feeding; we thank them for their dedication over the year. Both Feral Feeding Coordinators are looking for replacement feeders and would appreciate anyone who could dedicate less than an hour a week.

We would like to thank all other volunteers not highlighted. Without them, we would not have been able to raise the money and to take care of as many cats as ACR does.

FOSTERING AND ADOPTIONS

2007 was another great year for adoptions. Under the inspiring direction of Foster Coordinator Sharon Steinman, 152 of our feline clients found their forever homes – 100 kittens and 52 adults. Of those, 77 lucky cats/kittens went out in pairs/multiples. Every adoption is the result of a huge team effort with trappers, screeners, photographers, administrators and our veterinarians all playing a vital role. The heart of our adoption program is, of course, our foster parents who provide food and love in abundance. They also make veterinarian visits, nurse sick kittens and open their homes to potential adopters. Currently, we have a network of about 15 foster homes. Since 18 of our cats were adopted by their foster parents, you can see why we always need more foster homes and why falling in love is a serious occupational hazard!

Our Special Needs Cats

Nassau, a diabetic, requires twice-daily injections and has developed renal failure.

Montana is battling chronic diarrhea along with a heart and a hyperthyroid condition.

Gypsy, age 18, is on a prescription diet for kidney failure.

We wish to acknowledge, with a very special thank you, the selfless and compassionate foster parents who have risen to the challenge of looking after these vulnerable felines, rejoicing in their happy times and ameliorating their suffering.

Our Losses

This year was a tough year in terms of losses. We lost more foster cats than we usually do. This is the very sad reality of dealing with vulnerable cat populations who have been neglected, discarded and abandoned. Each of these wonderful animals touched our lives and we worked to ensure that our efforts brought them some level of comfort in their final days.

Pansy, one of Pandora's precious kittens did not survive the early stages of life. With five other kittens in the litter, Pandora simply felt overwhelmed by the numbers of kittens to feed. Pandora and her other 5 kittens went on to be adopted into loving forever-homes.



Pandora and six kittens



Satin, who was always small for her age, died on Christmas day of unknown causes. Though we could not gift her with a long life, we gave her a happy one - warm, well-fed and well-loved, with her two brothers, Tweed and Suede, to romp and cuddle.

Pebbles, a long time foster cat, suffered from an unknown illness, developed fluid in her lungs and had to be euthanized. Thank you Cherie for all the care and love you have given Pebbles from her days as a feral mom to her final days as a loving and affectionate girl.



Hemingway was brought in from our Kensington Route and was FIV and FeLV positive. Additionally, he suffered from painfully-inflamed gums and digestive issues. Thanks to Raven, Diane and Katherine who provided him a caring and loving environment for the time we were able to care for him.

Romeo's renal failure finally reached the end stage and the only option was to let him go. Veronica did a wonderful job of caring for him the past few years and her commitment to "McVinnie" (as she fondly referred to him) will not be forgotten.



Julia was a sweet kitten that we brought into the program that just never seemed to be healthy enough to adopt out. She was a petite dilute calico who was put on the earth to remind us all of the gentle and loving nature that cats bring to our lives. We sought medical advice but found that she had FIP and there was nothing we were able to do except to provide her comfort and love in her final hours.

By far, the majority of ACR foster cats are healthy, rambunctious, affectionate souls, needing only a couple of weeks or months of foster care to polish their indoor manners and to receive their immunizations before debuting on our website. Even when an adoption goes awry, there are good outcomes for our cats. We are thrilled to announce that in the past year we had a lower than average return rate, only 7 cats were returned to us, of which 5 have been adopted back out again.

Adoption Statistics

	Total Adopted	Total Returned	Single Adoption	Adopted in Pairs/Multiples	Kittens	Adult Males*	Adult Females*
2008 (Jan-May)	44	2	30	14	20	13	11
2007	152	4	75	77	100	18	34
2006	168	0	104	64	106	25	37
2005	160	1	96	64	109	26	25

***A kitten that is spay/neuter-ed at the time of adoption is considered "Adult"**

FERAL COLONY FEEDING

As ACR completes a decade of feral feeding, the number of feeders continues to grow. Although we began with a skeleton staff of just two or three, we now have upwards of 25 feeders who care for feral cats year round.

The majority of feeders routinely provide their own feline kibble, with a smaller number relying on food donated to ACR. Through TNR, our trappers have succeeded in stabilizing the number of feral cats at many of our feeding stations. However, new cats – sometimes ravenous – continue to appear. Some were recently born to feral mothers; others are mature ferals that have discovered our feeding stations; still others are semi-feral cats, perhaps kept as mousers that have escaped from local shops; also in attendance are domestic cats that have become lost or been abandoned by irresponsible owners. All of these new arrivals find comfort and relief at ACR feeding stations, some only briefly while awaiting placement in foster care and others for a lifetime. In 2007, ACR feeders continued to distribute more than 3,000 kg of dry cat food to upwards of 50 cats, operating daily throughout the worst blizzards and the most oppressive heat and smog.



TRAPPING

Dovercourt Colony

When our trappers take on a new colony, it always takes time to assess the number of cats living within it. When we first took on this colony, we originally thought there were four or five cats, but to date, we have trapped nine. This colony is in a residential area in Parkdale; the neighbourhood of an ACR TNR volunteer.

Tyndall Colony

There are eight cats living in the Tyndall colony, and our dedicated trapping volunteers are working hard to trap the cats. The colony lives between two apartment buildings in another residential area. Although some residents were feeding the cats, no TNR'ing had been taking place until ACR volunteers became involved.

Springhurst Colony

We have successfully TNR'd six cats in this colony. While trapping at this site began in 2006, it was officially taken on by ACR in 2007. This is a street that branches off a darker part of King St. West, and while some residents in the area were active in feeding the cats, no one was actively TNR'ing them.

Keele/Sheppard Colony

The colony is living around a construction site immediately to the east of the Toronto Animal Services North York location. It is relatively isolated with little-to-no residential or commercial buildings nearby.

The construction site is situated next to a lumberyard. The colony came to the attention of an individual who picks up supplies there for his construction work. He advised his wife, Marta, of the colony and she now tries to get there every evening to feed.

Fifteen cats in this colony have been trapped. One cat, Shower has been diagnosed with FIV, but as of December, continues to live the happy life of a feral, enjoying regular feedings and being surrounded by her other TNR'd buddies. Marta has been feeding them for approximately a year now.

Chester Colony

ACR was contacted last fall by a woman named Carolyn, about a feral colony she was feeding and two kittens that she took in from that colony. Her original intent was to try to get the kittens into the adoption program, but they proved too shy for the program and would need to go through socialization before being admitted. Not able to part with the now friendly sisters, they have found a permanent home with Carolyn.

There was still the issue of the growing colony, which at that point had grown to approximately 15 cats. The need for TNR was obvious as the new litters kept coming. Knowing how busy the ACR is and understanding the need for volunteers it was with persistence, patience, and a willingness to help out by providing recovery space (always in demand) and trapping, which enabled the TNR'ing to begin. It was clear this would need to be a group effort with Sara volunteering to do transport to and from the vet, things started moving fast!



Photos by Sara Slater

While feeding the cats one day, Carolyn noticed another woman in the alley feeding as well. As it turns out these cats are quite well fed! After talking to her it was clear that others were concerned about the group and wanted to help care for them and be involved the TNR'ing of colony. Now we really had a team! All now members of the ACR, the others help with recovery space, transportation, foster space, feeding and all around support. The owner of a house that backs on the alley has given the cats free reign of her yard and back deck for their living space. The cats feel quite at home and there are even plans for a kitty condo under her deck!

The trapping started in late March, and to date there has been ten cats TNR'd from this colony, eight kittens brought into the foster program, and three cats taken in permanently by the colony's caregivers. At this time there are only two cats left to trap at this colony.

The Boxcar Colony

By fall 2007, after just over a year of trapping, the last litter from the Boxcar Colony was rescued. As a result of our ongoing efforts, the last unspayed female and unneutered male were TNR'ed. (The last male to be neutered appears to have left the colony over the winter, and just a week ago, a new male has arrived, though he has no unspayed females to get pregnant, and will be TNR'ed soon.) The cats also gained private benefactors: A couple who generously decided to make an ongoing donation by continuously supplying all the dry food needed for the colony, as long as was necessary.

What seemed to be the start of a stable colony life for the remaining seven adult cats (all that were left out of 35 individuals logged at the site over a year and a half) only lasted through the winter.

Laurie Channer discovered through research, a neighbourhood association meeting, and communication with Councillor Pam McConnell's office that the City of Toronto will soon take over their site for waterfront development. The restaurant under which the cats live will be torn down during the winter of 2008-2009 and "Sherbourne Park" will be developed in that area. ACR is facing the challenge of re-homing a feral colony before November. This is the first time ACR has faced this kind of issue, but we expect it is likely to be an ongoing problem that feral cat colonies will face.



Flyers have been created to advertise the availability of the cats as barn or stable cats, and through personal connections of various volunteers, and a list of stables gathered on a past occasion for relocating some other ferals, they will be sent out and put up in as many nearby rural communities as possible. Two of the boxcar cats who are long-haired and suffer from flea allergy dermatitis cannot be placed in barns or stables, since they require monthly application of Advantage when left feral. They will be trapped for fostering and socializing, and once in a home, will not need constant flea treatment. These two females are already very social with one of the feeders, who has been remarkably dedicated to this colony for nine years now. This leaves five cats in need of placement.

Eastern Avenue

The Eastern colony, also called "the office colony" due to where the cats feed, is monitored by ACR volunteers in collaboration with the kind and compassionate owners of a nearby business. ACR volunteers began trapping for spay/neuter and return in this colony a year and a half ago, and to date, there is only one unspayed female remaining and a number of "office colony" kittens have been taken into foster care and adopted. As well, Caramel, an "office colony" cat who was severely injured when she was hit by a car in August 2007, was rescued by ACR's volunteers and proved to be one of this year's miraculous successes.



In September 2008, the business whose owners monitor the colony is likely moving when the lease is up. Because the owner of the building is not fond of the colony and the business owners are attached to the cats, they intend to move the colony to the new business location and take appropriate steps to reorient the cats in their new home. It is an admirable but challenging goal that will require re-trapping all of the colony's cats for a second time, which ACR volunteers are prepared to assist with when the time comes.

FUNDRAISING AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Overall, this year was a successful year for ACR as far as income generation. Our main source of funding comes from private donations of caring individuals, corporations and foundations. We are currently in the 2nd year of a 3-year grant from the Weston Foundation, for which we are eternally grateful. We were also successful in obtaining a grant from TD Canada Trust this year, which helped us immensely with our Trap-Neuter-Return program.

Each year, ACR participates in a number of community events with a goal to raise much-needed funds and awareness of the plight of the cat overpopulation in Toronto. In the past year, we have participated in the following community events:

- Vegetarian Food Fair
- Artisans Christmas Market
- All About Pets Show
- Toronto International Bicycle Show



Through these events, we have been able to raise more than \$5,000 and recruit many new volunteers and potential adopters. On behalf of everyone at ACR, we would like to thank the volunteers, who take time out of their busy schedules to organize and run these events.



We have a number of coin boxes in businesses around the city. Through a network of volunteers who monitor the boxes and the caring businesses that collect donations, we raised \$3,400 in 2007.

Thanks to the donations from our very generous donors, special events and coin boxes, we were able to raise more than \$55,000.

COMMUNICATIONS

Our Website

Thanks to our dedicated Web committee, we are in the process of revamping our website to include new branding and more photos of cats for adoption.

What you told us

This year, ACR took steps to learn more about our supporters and donors. Gaining a better understanding of who “you” are and what issues are important to you is essential to ensuring that we continue to meet the goals and challenges of the future. To help us achieve this, more than 220 ACR supporters (adopters, volunteers, members, & donors) took part in a survey of 30 key questions. Here are some of the key highlights of that survey:

- 70% of respondents have adopted at least one cat through ACR.
- More than 20% indicated that they have made a donation to ACR.
- 33% of our supporters found us through “word of mouth” referrals (friends, vets, etc.), while 36% learned of ACR through internet search engines like Yahoo! and Google.
- More than 48% of our respondents are married or living within a committed relationship with their life-partners.
- 33% of our donors are age 30 or under, while 50% are between the ages of 31 and 50.

To improve the way in which we communicate with our supporters, we asked you to tell us how you prefer to be contacted. Overwhelmingly, ACR supporters prefer email and mail as the primary forms of communication. You told us that the issues you want to know more about include the following (in order of preference):

- Cat care tips (55%)
- Success Stories (47%)
- How you can help information (44%)
- Volunteer Information (43%)

Almost 40 individuals took the time to add additional comments and offer excellent suggestions. We will take all your contributions into consideration as we strive to better communicate our accomplishments and goals. Our supporters have a tremendous impact on our work. Each volunteer, adopter, donor and supporter enables ACR to save lives, prevents thousands of unwanted kittens from tragic lives on the streets, and helps to spread love and joy to the hundreds of families who adopt the cats and kittens we rescue.

We couldn't do this without your support and participation in surveys like this one. Thank you to everyone who took the time to respond and contribute!



MEET SOME OF OUR RESCUES

TWEED AND SUEDE

Like most ACR cats, Tweed (a black-and-white male) and his brother Suede (all black), were born outdoors to a feral mom - in this case, under a porch in Parkdale. At least, that's where we think they were born, since their street-savvy mom kept moving them. Night after night, ACR volunteers laid their traps, unwilling to give up. A bitter winter was setting in, and they knew the tragic toll that cold and starvation takes on late-fall kittens.

Not only did our trappers rescue these two little brothers, but they also trapped and spayed mom, potentially saving her life as well. She'd already birthed at least three litters (all ACR fosters!) and multiple pregnancies quickly wear out female ferals, making them prey to predators and starvation.

Despite their chancy beginnings, Tweed and Suede soon showed that they loved everyone, cats and people alike. Each morning they'd perch beside their foster mom's pillow, purring their hearts out as if to say, "Oh, do wake up and see this - it's such a wonderful day!"

It was no surprise when The Yardgoods Brothers' first visitors instantly fell in love with them, accurately described on our website as "fun by the foot, purrs by the yard." Now Tweed and Suede - renamed Domino and Diego - have four people to play with, including a teenage boy and his sister who love animals. One of the adults is home all day to pet and feed them. They have two sets of stairs to run up and down, and their foster mom receives glowing reports, along with wonderful pictures of them sprawling, curled together like the yin/yang symbol, even happily playing in a bathtub with a couple of inches of water.

There's nothing especially dramatic about this story. We just wanted you to know how much happiness a little cooperative human kindness can bring.



SAMOSA'S STORY: A FERAL QUEEN TURNED INTO A HOUSECAT

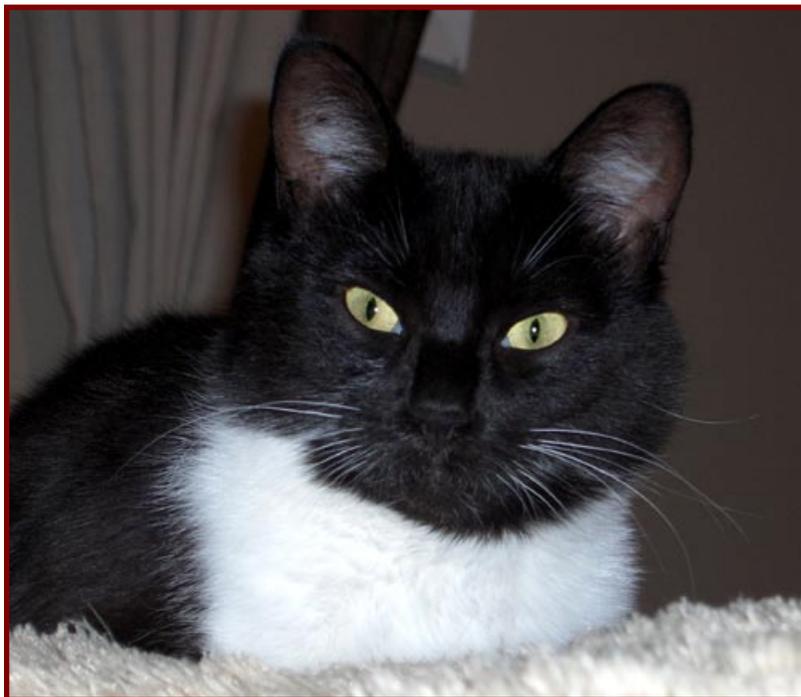
In late June 2007, a young, feral tuxedo cat, born on the streets of Toronto, was found with her litter of six kittens living under a stack of bricks and plywood at a construction site close to Toronto's waterfront. Soon after Samosa and her litter were taken in by ACR volunteers, it was discovered that the kittens were very ill. Thankfully, after spending three weeks struggling for their lives at a veterinary clinic, four of Samosa's kittens fully recovered and Eddo, Kiwi, Lychee and Yucca went on to be adopted into loving homes. While we mourn the loss of the two little ones who didn't make it, we are heartened by the other four kittens' happy endings found as a result of the tireless efforts of ACR volunteers.

Samosa, meanwhile, was intent on returning outdoors. She managed to escape from her foster home twice by determinedly biting and clawing her way through window screens. Luckily, equally-determined ACR volunteers re-trapped Samosa and she was ultimately spayed and returned to her foster home for recovery. Although it was obvious that she was unhappy inside, Samosa's foster mom and the ACR Coordinator did not feel comfortable returning her, as they would another TNR cat, to the location from which she was rescued, as she would neither be monitored nor fed there. So with the support of ACR, it was decided that Samosa would be released to the backyard of her foster home where at least she could be monitored and fed. It was a leap of faith, but amazingly, Samosa quickly settled into a routine. Daily she returned for food, first watching from a distance and then approaching to eat. Through the summer, fall and into the winter, Samosa and her foster mom continued this routine, until one day, miraculously, Samosa brushed herself against her foster mom's leg. The battle was half-won.

As the months passed, Samosa steadily gained trust in her ever-patient foster mom, until one very cold night shortly after Christmas when Samosa's foster mom was finally able to pick her up and carry her into the house. The hope was that Samosa would be able to warm up indoors overnight, and possibly spend the winter months inside until the spring weather returned.

Amazingly, with patient encouragement, Samosa became increasingly more comfortable inside and now, after a year of unconditional love and care, Samosa is finally enjoying life as an indoor cat. She approaches her foster mom for attention, lounges happily by the bay window, and even sleeps on the bed! In a few more months, you may even see Samosa on the ACR website, ready for adoption!

Successes like Samosa's are exactly what the ACR is about; giving cats a second chance and offering them better lives. Thank you, Samosa, for allowing the ACR to be a part of your triumphant story!



VASILLE

Last October, an email came in about a cat eating out of someone's garbage. The family brought the cat into their home, but they had no experience with cats and didn't know what to feed him or what else he needed. So they knocked on their neighbours' doors asking for advice, and the next day they contacted the Annex Cat Rescue for help.



Annex Cat Rescue had the cat dropped off at Dundas Euclid Animal Hospital, where it was discovered that he had a microchip! The Annex Cat Rescue Foster Coordinator was able to contact the owner listed on the microchip. However, the owner adamantly insisted that he knew nothing about the cat. The Foster Coordinator then called the microchip company and asked as many details as she could. She was able to learn the cat's name: Vasilie.

With more information, the Foster Coordinator again called the owner listed on the microchip. "Are you sure that you don't know this cat?" she asked, commenting on the uniqueness of the cat's Romanian name. The man then said that maybe, just maybe he might have more information: His ex-wife had recently moved to Romania. The man subsequently tracked down his ex-wife, and this is where the story gets really interesting.

Penny, the cat's original owner, had made arrangements for a relative in Canada to care for Vasilie because she was moving to Romania. Soon after, the relative had informed her that Vasilie had passed away. Needless to say, Penny was shocked when the Annex Cat Rescue Foster Coordinator informed her that Vasilie was indeed alive and well, and in the care of Annex Cat Rescue. As soon as she could, Penny flew to Toronto and was thrilled to be reunited with her beloved Vasilie.

Vasilie is now enjoying his new life in Romania with his loving caregiver, thanks to the dedication and determination of Annex Cat Rescue volunteers who made this happy reunion possible.

HARMONY

Harmony came to ACR looking very much like a down-on-her-luck movie queen. As she explored her new foster home, uttering rusty-husky meows, she reminded her foster mom of the faded belle in the musical "Cats," singing the show-stopper "Memories." Given Harmony's pug face, and the remains of her long-haired tortoise coat, she appeared to be a purebred Persian, about three years old. Alas, after living rough on the mean streets, she was so matted and flea-ridden that our vet had to shave her once-luxurious coat down to a poodle-cut: Cute, but not the crowning glory she was used to.



ACR has no idea how a cat like Harmony ended up homeless. A woman in the east end had fed her for three weeks at the door before calling us. Despite the indignities of having to forage for food, Harmony proved herself a lady born and bred. She easily adapted to foster-home life, allowing the older cats to snuggle up against her, and often paused in her grooming to lick the faces of the kittens. She especially loved being brushed, and she never saw a plate of food she didn't enjoy.



Harmony (now Delphine) was adopted by a music teacher with a fondness for antiques. She and her sister feline - yet another Persian with an equally splendid coat - live a life of refinement amidst teacups and, yes, Persian rugs, with much dashing about whenever the spirit moves them.

MEMPHIS

In January 2007, Memphis was rescued from the Parkdale neighbourhood. She was very small for her age and we initially thought that she was 10-12 weeks old (which already greatly surpassed the ideal feral kitten rescue age of 5-6 weeks). It is fact that with every passing day, the difficulty of socializing a feral kitten increases exponentially. But a cold winter outdoors was no place for a young kitten to survive and she was brought to a foster home.

After a period of time with little progress, we learned that this wild kitten was likely closer to 16-weeks-old when she was rescued! Too old to be easily tamed, but now having been indoors too long for TNR to be suitable (by that time Toronto was experiencing an incredibly bitterly cold winter), we began our long journey together.

Memphis is an extremely-intelligent and high-strung cat. Many different volunteers worked with her and she was moved to several fairly experienced foster homes in an effort to help her adapt to life with people. She tolerated being petted to some degree, but it was clear that she was not willing to trust humans, even if they fed her.

Eventually, one of the volunteers realized that instead of trying to convince her to like us, maybe there could be a common ground of her tolerating people's company through more interesting stimulation. Her incredible foster mom began trying to teach her tricks... And it worked!



It all started with Memphis' favourite toy – a plastic golf ball – batting it across the floor back to her foster mom's toes when it was tossed across the room and Memphis was asked to fetch it. Over a series of weeks, clever Memphis increased her interaction with people and continued to expand her repertoire to include other tricks as: "Gimme five!", "High five!", "Shake paw" (and "Shake other paw" too!), "Jump up!" (onto a lap or surface), "Lie down", "Come" and "Turn around" (in a circle). Memphis (who was never keen on being picked up to say the least!) even came to trust her handler enough to allow herself to be grasped when politely requested for a "Pick up!". We were all very proud and awed to see this former street cat perform more tricks than your average dog!

This was the remarkable beginning of Memphis' connection with humans. During her time with us, this young lady has blossomed into a beautiful cat with shiny black fur and pale yellow eyes. Memphis continues her love of play and she gets along well with other cats – but best of all – she even now likes to be petted and enjoys playing with people!

JUNO'S STORY (as told by Her Foster Mom)

It was late winter when we received a call that a pregnant cat needed to be fostered. With kitten season typically beginning in early spring, we were thrilled when the beautiful white, amber and ROUND Juno came to stay. She was such a young, sweet and innocent looking girl that we named her Juno after the title character in the popular film Juno. We thought that despite being visibly pregnant, she still had a few weeks left to go, but Juno had other ideas!

Two days after her arrival, I arrived home and jokingly asked my husband, who was home early from work, if Juno had had her kittens yet. He told me that she had not. When I went into her room, I saw Juno sitting quietly outside of her little blue tent. And then I heard scratching noises coming from inside the tent! When I poked my head in, I saw that there were three beautiful, teeny little calico kittens! Given how excited I was, you would think that the three girls were my own grandchildren! (Even more exciting – not a drop of mess on the carpet!) Juno let me meet her kittens right away, each one for a very short period of time before she retrieved her and brought her back to her sisters. We named Juno's kittens Grammy, Genie and Emmy after the famous award shows. We figured that it was fitting, as they were all award-winning cuties!



Unbelievably, as the days progressed, Juno's kittens got even cuter and cuter! Both my husband and I loved rushing into their room after work to see how much they'd grown and to watch Juno work harder and harder to keep them all in line. Like most little girls, the kittens got into mischief, but when they got caught, they looked up with huge kitten eyes and all was forgiven.

We have enjoyed watching each kitten develop her own distinct personality and hope that soon each will find her forever-home.



TEQUILA a.k.a. CAROLINE a.k.a. BOSSY BOOTS

Tequila came in to the foster program with her brothers Mojito and Tabasco and their mother Angelica. They were an extra-beautiful litter and there was little doubt that they would be adopted quickly. Angelica was very protective and dominant and was quickly adopted out as an only cat. Mojito and Tabasco got adopted together by a lovely woman who had recently lost custody of her cats in a divorce.

Tequila was held back from the website due to a bit of coccidia she could not shake. Sometimes when kittens miss being put up on the website at 8 weeks of age, they end up staying in the program for months, as people prefer to adopt the youngest kittens. We were confident this wouldn't happen with Tequila because she was so unique-looking; the most like her mom, with brown tabby markings, white boots and a white bib.



Weeks came and went and no one inquired about adopting Tequila. She ended up staying throughout the summer in the foster program. We decided to change her name to Caroline, in an attempt to determine if perhaps the name might be causing the lack of interest. Additionally, we placed numerous pictures on the website, and she became the featured cat. In total, she was in the foster program for six months, an extraordinarily long time for a healthy, young kitten.

As Caroline grew, she revealed more of her extroverted personality; The boss of everything! Nothing happened in the apartment without her approval... and if it did, you had a cranky Caroline on your hands for the whole day. When she was a kitten, she climbed up your pants and as she grew she continued this habit. Now over a year old, her adoptive family recently contacted us letting us know that she is still doing that and occasionally surprising them by simply jumping on to their backs. Her forever-family sends updates often, and she has two other playmates to keep her company, a must for a bossy, rambunctious cat like Caroline.

We love hearing stories from our adopters. Adopters, please don't hesitate to share your stories and updates with ACR!



HEALEY

Healey was trapped at around 10 weeks of age, but unfortunately it was a time when ACR's foster space was beyond capacity, and he had to wait in the trapper's bathroom until a space became available.

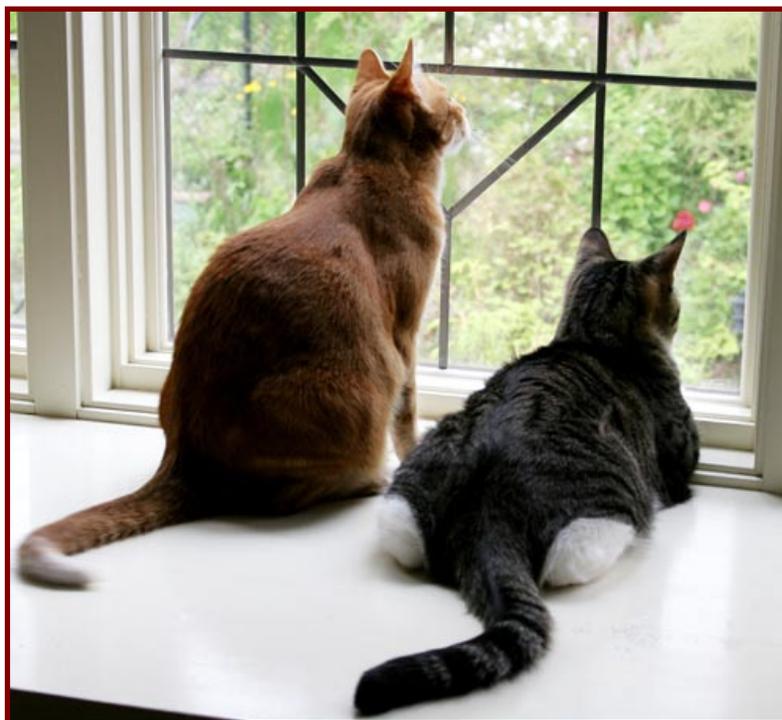
Finally, a space opened up in a foster home where his brother Harris was also being fostered. Harris was very social at this point, and adopted out to a loving couple, but Healey remained extremely fearful of people and refused to even be touched by even one finger.

From the start, Healey's foster mom had noticed one of his back claws seemed to be coloured black, but didn't think too much of it, until one day she discovered little bloody footprints. So his foster parents managed to get him into a carrier and to the vet where it was discovered that he had actually had a claw ripped out and the bone underneath shattered. To make matters even worse, he had gnawed one of his other claws down and it was badly infected. He was in much pain and both claws had to be completely removed.



When Healey came home from the vet, his foster mom sat down on the floor, and to her surprise, Healey came right over and climbed on her lap wanting to be pet! His foster mom looked down at this beautiful kitten with tears in her eyes, and he looked up at her as if to say, "Thank you for ending my pain!"

After spending some time in the dreaded "cone" so that he would not be able to bite at his healing paw, a wonderful couple came to meet Healey because they wanted a playmate for their cat. He was shy around the new "strangers", but his adoptive mom could tell he was special. So the next day he went to his new forever home. Although it took him a little while to settle in, he soon realized he loved his new family, his new home with the big windows overlooking a beautiful ravine at the front, and a wildlife-filled backyard, and he especially loved his new sister Lucy.



CARBON AND THE COPY CATS

There were only supposed to be two kittens. Rescued from a west end garage, the fluffy black-and-white duo was named Xerox and CopyCat (aka CC) by their excited foster parents, who had no idea at the time how astoundingly appropriate those names would soon prove to be! 6-week-old Xerox and CC had barely arrived indoors when their foster home's telephone began to ring. Much to everyone's surprise, a third littermate had just been discovered! And soon after, all-black Carbon joined his brother and sister indoors. Content with their trio of "Copycats", it was a shock to all when Xerox, CC and Carbon's foster parents received another telephone call. A fourth littermate had just been discovered! And soon after, black-and-white Triplicat (aka Trip) joined the rapidly-replicating Copycats brood. With black-and-white kittens in triplicate plus little all-black Carbon making four, the kittens' unsuspecting foster parents answered their ringing telephone again one night more than a week later. Guess what! True to their astoundingly-appropriate "Copycat" names, a fifth littermate had just been discovered! Could just one more all-black kitten join his siblings in their foster home? And so, with the arrival of Toner (aka Tony), the Copycats brood was finally complete at five and it wasn't long before the kittens were adopted into loving forever homes. First CopyCat (now "CeCe"), then Triplicat and Xerox (now "Penelope" and "Henry"), then Toner (now "Bagheera").



Carbon, Xerox, CC

Sadly, the story of the smallest Copycat, Carbon, ends differently. Diagnosed with a heart murmur when he was 8 weeks old, Carbon's condition worsened as he grew. On August 29, 2007, at just five-months-old, our beloved Carbon passed away suddenly and unexpectedly. In the short time that he was with us, we watched Carbon grow from a fluffy baby-kitten to a sleek teenage-kitten with big paws, even bigger ears, and a tail with a comical kink at the very tip. He had bright eyes and he was full of energy. Carbon's diagnosis never slowed him down. He had cat-friends to chase, toys to pounce at, stairs to scale, furniture to climb and wooden floors to slip-and-slide across. As friendly as he was, Carbon just never had time to be held. He always had things to do, places to go, new adventures to embark on.



The night before Carbon passed away, he enjoyed a big bowl of canned food, played with the resident cats in his foster home and then contentedly tired out, he stretched out on the windowsill at dusk. He looked down at the city with his bright eyes enjoying the summer breeze while being pet, talked to and doted on. That night, Carbon purred and he was happy.

Although Carbon was never adopted, although this special kitten never had the "forever-family" that he deserved, Carbon's foster family loved him every day as though he was their own. Thanks to ACR's team of dedicated volunteers, Carbon's five months with us were happy and carefree. While his time with us was far too short, typical of Carbon, he just never had time to be held. Carbon always had things to do, places to go, new adventures to embark on. Carbon is deeply missed by all who were privileged to know and love him.

CAMEL

Caramel was a cat born into the monitored Eastern Avenue colony, also called “the office colony” due to where the cats feed, behind a business in the east end. Caramel was not trapped as a kitten because she became trap-savvy after witnessing several trappings of other cats in the colony, including two of her siblings. Regardless of what tempting bait was used, she was just too clever to be trapped, and inevitably she became pregnant. When they were old enough to be weaned, Caramel’s adorable kittens, CocaCola and Orange Crush, were successfully rescued, placed in foster homes and quickly adopted into loving forever-homes. Meanwhile, despite the best efforts of ACR volunteers, Caramel would not be trapped.



Then in August 2007, Caramel showed up briefly for a regular feeding behind the office and the feeders quickly saw that Caramel was walking oddly and shaking. She was clearly very hurt. Immediately, all trapping efforts increased. Day and night, tireless ACR volunteers were determined to save Caramel. Thanks to the office’s cat-friendly practice of leaving the door open for the cats to wander inside to feed, Caramel did just that one day, and a feeder was able to close the door behind her. Over the next two hours, Caramel was allowed to relax under desks as the feeders slowly restricted her space until at long last she could be gently nudged into a cat carrier. Caramel was finally safe.

Rushed to the veterinarian, ACR volunteers soon learned that Caramel had been hit by a car and her pelvis was broken in three places. Caramel underwent specialist surgery at Dundas Euclid Animal Hospital soon after and her pelvis was reconstructed with plates and pins. Following the surgery, Caramel

spent six weeks on cage rest to recover. It was in her foster home during recovery that it was discovered that Caramel is actually very sociable! Despite her clever street-smart attitude outdoors, indoors Caramel purrs when patted and loves rubs under her chin!

After a perfect recovery, Caramel was adopted in a loving forever-home. In a remarkable twist of fate, Caramel’s adopter was a young woman who had herself also once been hit by a car. She felt an affinity with Caramel after seeing Caramel’s story of miraculous perseverance on the ACR website.

Generous donations helped to fund Caramel’s medical care, and also to fund the care of countless other cats and kittens rescued by ACR. The dedicated volunteers who monitor, feed, trap, offer transport and provide foster care also play critical roles in ensuring that cats like Caramel find happy endings. You too could be a part of a story like Caramel’s for other ACR kittens and cats with just a contribution of time and compassion.



STATEMENT OF SURPLUS¹

	Year Ended December 31, 2007	Year Ended December 31, 2006
Revenues		
Adoption Fees	12,700	13,670
Donations	46,952	49,808
Fundraising	5,372	5,546
Interest	1,728	749
Membership Dues	230	280
Donation Boxes	3,406	5,931
Revenue Total	70,388	75,984
Operating Expenses		
Advertising Expense	795	2,722
Bank Charges	212	163
Foster Expenses	220	378
Fundraising Expense	3,009	2,490
Administration	4,679	6,420
Transportation Expense	297	535
Veterinary Services	45,873	38,475
Operating Totals	55,085	51,183
Surplus (Deficit) for the period	15,303	24,801
Opening Surplus (Deficit)	52,635	27,834
Ending Surplus (Deficit)	67,938	52,635

¹ For the year ended December 31, 2007, with comparative figures for the year ended December 31, 2006