



Forgotten Cats News

September 2023

August Status:

In August, we sterilized 2225 cats and placed 168 cats into loving forever homes.

Sorry we're late, but here's the latest news . . .



PART 1 - The Story of the Yellow House

By Mary Ann Emely

Yellow House Team Manager Kerry Reeves says *"Most people that visit the Forgotten Cats main clinic facility in Trainer, PA do not notice the non-descript small house that sits just off to the side of the clinic parking lot. From the outside the house is not much to look at – a small, single-story building with faded, pale-yellow paint. It's commonly referred to as 'yellow house.' However, within the walls of this building a team of dedicated and passionate volunteers perform a very critical and necessary function to support lifesaving measures for the most critically ill and endangered cats. The enemy – Panleukopenia."*

Although yellow house got its name because it is actually yellow, but the name is apropos, as the color yellow was also used to indicate that a house had a contagious disease such as Cholera, malaria, or yellow fever. The Forgotten Cats yellow house began operation as an isolation facility about 8-10 years ago. The house



A precious little patient currently receiving treatment at "yellow house"

sits behind the Trainer clinic; FC founder Felicia Cross bought it so the neighbors wouldn't be bothered by the comings and goings at the clinic.

During that time there was an outbreak of calicivirus at the Trainer clinic and FC needed a place to isolate the infected kittens. Feline calicivirus is a highly contagious virus that causes a mild to severe respiratory infection and oral disease in cats. The yellow house had a back porch which was used to isolate the infected cats.

This outbreak was followed by a panleuk outbreak. Panleukopenia (panleuk) is a deadly, highly contagious virus that mostly affects young kittens and unvaccinated cats. The panleuk virus is found everywhere in the environment; it is strong and can live for years. The virus can survive in the environment it was shed into or be carried on shoes, paws, bedding, bowls, litter boxes, etc. It can survive at freezing temperatures and room temperatures, and it can also survive the use of certain disinfectants, including alcohol.



Recovered kitties always receive a special bath before being returned to the healthy Forgotten Cats environment.

Symptoms of panleuk may include: lethargy; depression; vomiting; diarrhea; painful abdomen (when touched or may appear tense and distended without touching); dehydration; weight loss; rough or unkempt hair coat; fever; and decreased to absent appetite. Cats and kittens may appear to hang their heads over their water bowls – they want to drink, but the virus has attacked their intestines, and eating and drinking may be too painful for them.

At the time of that first panleuk outbreak that the yellow house handled, a couple of the kittens that

had been brought into the clinic were ill and tested positive for panleuk. Because of its highly contagious and often fatal nature, those kittens were brought to the yellow house and isolated in the garage. Eventually, the whole house was set up to care for cats and kittens suffering from or with known exposure to the virus.

Cats infected with panleuk frequently develop secondary infections as well, due to the weakened state of their immune systems. Most cats who survive outside for a whole summer will likely be exposed to panleuk. If their immune system is healthy and fully developed, they may be able to fight it off. It is most serious in kittens between five weeks of age and six months. Kittens younger than five weeks will likely still have antibodies from their mother; cats older than six months have stronger immune systems. While this disease can attack cats of any age it is often fatal in kittens. There is no cure for panleuk once a cat has been infected, but supportive care must begin immediately to save the cat's life.

This is where the yellow house team takes over. Most shelters euthanize cats diagnosed with panleuk. FC is one of the very few in the country that does not euthanize. Because there are currently no drugs available to kill the virus that causes panleuk, treating cats with feline panleukopenia involves treating the

symptoms (such as dehydration, nausea and diarrhea) with medications, hydration, nutritional support, and intensive nursing care. As soon as infected cats are diagnosed, the yellow house team of volunteers is notified – they get the call that there are “incoming.”

Kerry says *“Once cats test positive or have been exposed, they are immediately transferred to quarantine where they are evaluated and segregated into specific rooms based on their needs – critical, non-critical and monitoring only. The most critical individuals receive full protocol of fluids, antibiotics, anti-nausea medications, temperature regulation, tube feeding or force feeding, appetite stimulants and weights are closely monitored.”*

Forgotten Cats is one of the few rescue facilities that performs this function – the sad reality is that most cats and kittens infected with panleuk are humanely euthanized by private practice veterinarians and other shelters due to the inability to quarantine and treat.”

Once it is known that there will be residents in the yellow house, a schedule is sent out for the volunteers to sign up for shifts each morning and evening that we have patients. Each shift is responsible for administering meds, force feeding, cleaning and disinfecting of all surfaces and, most importantly, caring and loving of the patients. All of the yellow house personnel are volunteers, most with no medical background at all. They are compassionate people who love cats and have a strong aptitude for wanting to be trained in things medical and scientific. They thrive working in a team environment because it is critical that every other person on the team knows what transpired during the previous shift. It helps if volunteers already know how to administer injections. Often the volunteers linger beyond their normal shift hours so they can give a patient extra loving care and encouragement to help get them over the recovery hurdle.

Kerry goes on to say that *“Each year the yellow house team treats approximately 60-80 cats exposed to or infected with panleuk with a save rate of approximately 80%. This is an extraordinarily good result! Providing supportive care to save every life is a demanding and often a heartbreaking task. The yellow house team provides 2-3 daily shifts to ensure the resident cats receive every possible treatment they need. Each success is celebrated – there is an official “graduation” from the house, and each loss is mourned deeply by the team.”*

In next month’s newsletter, Part II of this Volunteer Spotlight article looks at the individual team members and some of their personal yellow house stories.



Nugget, like all YH patients, gets a stuffed animal to keep them company throughout their treatment.



MED TEAM VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Med team volunteers needed at our Trainer, PA Clinic (near the border of Claymont, DE)

- Shifts are approximately 3 hours in length one day a week.
- Morning and evening shifts available.
- Responsibilities include:
 - Caring for sick cats and kittens during shift
 - Administering medication to sick cats/kittens
 - Observing and logging cat's medical progress
 - Communicating and working effectively with other med team members and volunteers

Training provided. Medical background is a plus but not a requirement. Must be comfortable handling cats. Attention to detail is essential.

Reliability - this is not a position where last minute call outs will be permitted except in the case of an emergency. The cats will be dependent on your reliability.

Serious inquiries only- email: info@forgottencats.org

Yoda Finds His Place in the Galaxy.

By Collette O'Neal



After patiently waiting for two and a half years, one of our longest resident special needs kitties, Yoda, finally found his forever family this May.

Initially brought into Forgotten Cats as a kitten with a rectal rupture, Yoda went through two surgeries to make sure he was as healthy as could be. Throughout the intense recovery period his foster mom Kathy said he remained in high spirits, he didn't mind traveling, and he

could easily adapt to new situations.

"Everywhere he went people fell in love with him. He was a very easy going and quirky little cat that knew what he wanted and was pretty content around anyone he met" Kathy said. "His motto was 'the more peeps I meets, the more pets I gets.'"

His popularity only grew among FC volunteers, and he was shown at several adoption events. Even after spending over a month at the local PetSmart there wasn't much interest in him, and Yoda was getting uncomfortable there. Kathy was bewildered as to why a simple over-the-counter medicine routine and a special food deterred so many people from considering him, so she set on a mission to get Yoda the perfect home.

That's when she came up with the idea to write a Dear Santa letter on his behalf to share his story and ask if he could hop in Santa's sleigh to find his family. The Facebook post got lots of attention, including from Yoda's future mom, Emily, who had been waiting to find the right cat. She read his story and immediately got emotional.



Emily and her husband Chris went to meet Yoda at an upcoming adoption event and learned what his exact needs were. Since Yoda had been at the adoption center for a long time, he wasn't too keen on seeing visitors, but they understood not to take it personally.

They visited him at the PetSmart frequently but needed to wait until they got permission from their landlord to bring him to their apartment while they prepped for their move to Florida.

On one of their visits, they met Kathy and she agreed to foster Yoda again until then. She could see how much the couple adored him and wanted to give him a great life.



"They are so responsible" Kathy said. "They were asking questions about what Yoda needed, they continued to visit him at my home to see his fun personality, and they did their own research on where to get his supplies when they moved."

For Emily and Chris it was important to give a home to a cat that had been overlooked for a long time. Once they realized how easy his medical routine was and what to watch for it was a no brainer that Yoda was the right one for their family of two cats and small reptiles. They could also tell he was deeply loved by Kathy and other FC volunteers involved in his journey.

"Before we brought him home Kathy threw him a little going away party where he got lots of attention, toys and treats." Emily said. "Then when we got back to our apartment he almost immediately settled in and snuggled up to us."

Of all of the cats they have, Chris says Yoda is the most affectionate, relaxed, and low maintenance. He's also completely comfortable taking his medicine twice a day and will jump up when Chris taps on the counter and willingly opens his mouth when he sees the syringe. It's now been two months since the family moved down south and Yoda's new favorite pastime is watching out the window at lizards, tree frogs, and other little critters he's never seen before. He also loves to welcome in anyone who's visiting the house with a tail hug and purrs. And when he's not relaxing, he's finding new places to explore.



"He's definitely the smartest cat we have, so Yoda being the wisest character just fits him perfectly. He just knows too much," they said jokingly. "He's able to open every door we have and when he watches us do things, I think he wonders why and how we do something and then he figures it out. Sometimes we'll even find him taking naps in the kitchen cabinets."

Watching Yoda's transformation from shelter life to his foster home and quickly settling into his forever home has been the greatest part for Emily and Chris as pet parents. To them it's his personality that makes him special a lot more so than his few medical needs. They hope people will learn that the phrase "special needs" doesn't automatically mean a high effort pet.

They want others to know that each cat's situation is unique and it's okay to ask questions first before moving on to the next cat in the room. If there's still some hesitation, they hope



more people will consider doing a foster-to-adopt application instead to see if it's the right fit for them while also giving a deserving pet a break.

"The cats that have been there a long time aren't usually happy to be there. They want space to run around and relax, and the majority of those cats will only get better when they are in a home. What you see in the shelter is not the total picture of what you actually get. In the end, you get a friend that loves you for giving it a safe place to be themselves."

Trainer Facility at ZERO Intake . . . Can You Help?



We are still bringing in hundreds of cats and kittens every week. Currently, we are inundated with nursing mothers and babies. If fosters are not available, we are forced in most cases, to return the mom and kittens to where they were living outside. *We would prefer to put them in foster homes and then, once old enough, into our adoption centers.* The kittens we would like fostered range in age from a few days old to a few weeks. We also have "bottle babies".

Please consider opening your home to foster a mom and kittens.

They can be kept in a large dog crate which we will provide. All you need to do is provide food and water for the mom and clean her litter box once/day. They can stay in a basement, bathroom, or any spare room in your home. The crate is about 2' X 3' and can sit on the floor or table. The kittens will be ready for adoption in a few weeks' time and at that point we will take mom and kittens back.

They are the cutest little balls of fur. You will get so much enjoyment from watching them develop and knowing that they will be going to homes where they will be cared for the rest of their lives.

If you want to foster or if you need more information, please contact info@forgottencats.org and include your phone number and we will be in touch very soon. Or complete our foster application at: <https://forgottencats.org/foster-a-cat/>. Every day counts!

Please share this email with anyone who can help!

****We are also seeking fosters for adult cats as well.**

Tortillas, Eggs & Pies - Oh My!!!!

You can't imagine how thrilled we were when we were contacted by Jordan's Way, an organization dedicated to helping shelters raise much needed funds, to ask us if we would like to participate in their 300 shelter National Tour.



Naturally, the answer was YES! This was such an awesome opportunity for Forgotten Cats and some of our most amazing volunteers all came together on September 21st to participate in the antics to raise funds for the cats and kittens that we care for.



So, in came the dunk tank and out came the tortillas, whipped cream pies and eggs! For those of you that weren't able to tune in for the live event, here are some of the highlights from the event. *Left: One of our mother/daughter teams (Kerry & Maddie) during one of the "tortilla slap" competitions!*



We think our Development Director Olivia had a little too much fun "pieing" our Executive Director Felicia!

Below, another one of our mother/daughter teams - Crystal got pied by her mom Margie!



Holly being a good sport (as always!) in the dunk tank!

We would like to extend our thanks to the volunteers that came together to endure the antics in the name of raising funds for the cats! Not only was this event fun for those that watched and/or participated, but all the cats got treats as well. They may have been a bit perplexed by the antics, but they enjoyed their special treats!

Thank you to Chris and the Jordan's Way Team for including Forgotten Cats on their tour - we look forward to working together again in the future.



And last, but certainly not least, many thanks to all of you that donated during the fundraiser. Thanks to you, we raised close to \$12,000 for the cats and kittens in our care!

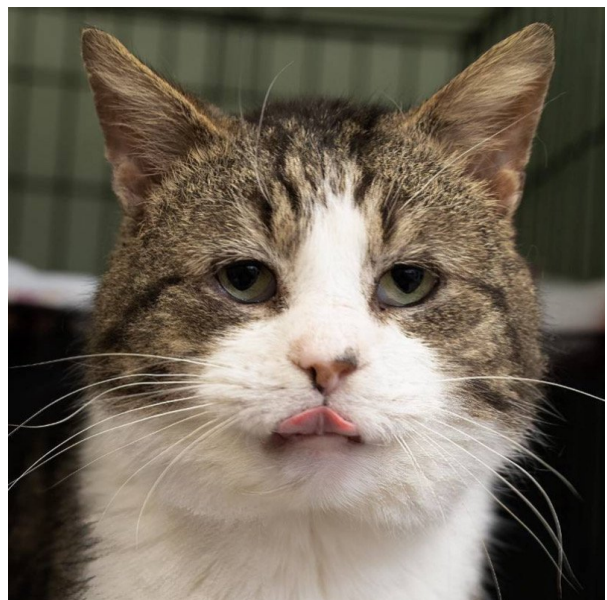


Allow us to introduce special needs kitty, Jasper!

Please help!! A new foster is needed for this Cuddle-bug!!! Just me, please!!!

Hi! I'm Jasper! I am the cutest, most loving boy! I've been aged at about 9 years old because my teeth have been extracted. I'm a big, cuddly boy who will greet you with head butts and love snuggling in for some pets. I will respond with loud purrs and making lots of happy biscuits. I have been nicknamed "Mr. Biscuits" by my foster because making biscuits is one of my favorite things to do!

Do not let my age fool you, I am a very playful guy! I love running through tunnels, chasing balls and eating!!! I am also FIV+. Please do not let this scare you off. Please check the quick facts sheet (below).



I am a people-cat and do not like other cats. I was diagnosed with early stage kidney disease and am eating a special kidney diet food.

Please submit our no-obligation adoption application for a meet and greet or to adopt: <https://forgottencats.org/adoption-application/>. Not ready to adopt? Please consider fostering: <https://forgottencats.org/foster-a-cat/>.



FIV+ Cat Facts

Cats who test positive for Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) are often euthanized or are considered unadoptable. In fact, cats who test positive for FIV usually live long, healthy lives and do not infect other household pets.

Transmission: "FIV is mainly passed from cat to cat through deep bite wounds, the kind that usually occur outdoors during aggressive fights and territorial disputes—the perfect reason to keep your cat inside." - The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)*

"Casual non-aggressive behavior" does not spread FIV. "Cats in households with stable social structures [...] are at little risk for acquiring infections." -Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine*

MYTH: A cat can pass on FIV by living with other household cats, sharing water bowls and cleaning each other.

FACT: FIV is only transmitted through deep blood-drawing bite wounds. FIV+ cats can happy lives in socialized multi-cat households.

MYTH: FIV+ cats will become ill and die at an early age.

FACT: FIV+ cats do not have a higher incidence of illness, and live the same lifespan as non FIV+ cats.

Lifespan: Multiple medical studies show that cats who test positive for FIV live just as long as FIV-negative cats.*

"FIV itself does not cause severe clinical signs, and FIV infected cats live many years without any health problems."

- Hartman, *Veterinary Immunology and Immunopathology*, 2011

*Addie, Toth, Reid, Jarrett, Dennis & Callanan, *Veterinary Record*, 2000

*Gleich, Krieger & Hartmann, *Journal of Feline Medicine & Surgery*, 2009

*Little, Bienzie, Carioto, Chisholm, O'Brien & Scherk, *The Canadian Veterinary Journal*, 2011

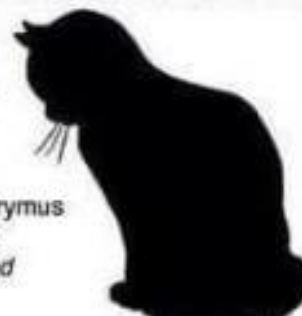
Please spread the facts about FIV+ cats to your veterinarians, rescues, shelters, and friends!



FIV+ cats need love too!

*Hosie, Addie, Belak, Boucraut-Baralon, Egberink, Frymus & Lloret, *Journal of Feline Medicine & Surgery*, 2009

*Walker, Canfield & Love, *Veterinary Immunology and Immunopathology*, 1994



Upcoming Events - Fall FUN Raffle Fundraiser!

Starting October 6 through October 16

We're super excited about our upcoming raffle. One of our very generous

supporters donated 2 Eagles tickets with parking pass and some really cool Eagles "swag"!

We also have some other wonderful prizes listed below, just to name a few . . .

"Enjoy the flavors of Italy!" Basket
Concord Pet Gift Basket
Lottery Bouquet & Hershey Chocolates
Restaurant Certificates & More!

Many thanks to: Kathy, Pizza By Elizabeths, Longwood Gardens, White Dog Cafe, Olive N Grape, Mary, Carolyn, Concord Pet, & Sandy!



Forgotten Cats Fall FUN Raffle

Starts October 6 at 8:00 am through October 16 at 8:00 pm!

Buy chances to win:

- Philadelphia Eagles vs. Miami Dolphins Tickets/Parking Pass & Eagles Swag**
- Lottery Ticket Bouquet & Hershey Chocolates
- Restaurant Certificates, Themed Gift Baskets & More

Winners announced automatically via email by the RallyUp raffle platform.

100% of the proceeds go directly to helping the cats & kittens in our care!

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Chewy Wish List

It's never been easier to give back! Help our animals in need by shopping our Wish List on Chewy to donate much-needed pet food and supplies directly to our organization. Just click on "Chewy Wish List" above.



Please donate to our
Wish List!

Amazon Wish List

Unfortunately, Amazon has decided to discontinue their Amazon Smile donation program. But please keep in mind that we also have a Wish List on Amazon for much needed items - just click on "Amazon Wish List" above. This makes it super easy to help Forgotten Cats by donating much needed food and supplies to our organization.

We Want to Hear from You!

If you have an idea for an article or a story you would like to share about a rescue, special volunteer, your adoption center or recent adoptions from Forgotten Cats, please send story and photos if possible to: info@forgottencats.org

Our Corporate Sponsors



We value the commitment of community businesses and when they partner with us, they partner in our lifesaving efforts. Click the following link if you are

interested in learning more about our sponsorship opportunities:
<https://forgottencats.org/services/capital-campaign/>

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