



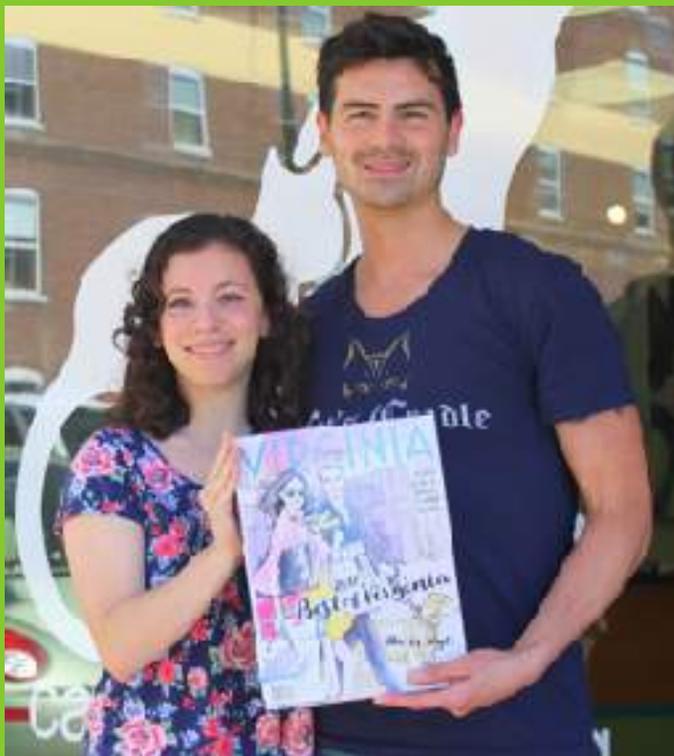
Newsletter

What's New, Pussycat?

July 2017



ME"WOW"!!! Cat's Cradle Voted One of Virginia's BEST CHARITIES - Second Year in a Row!!!



Diana Black & Matt Chan

We are so excited to announce that for the second year in a row, Cat's Cradle has been named one of the top charities in Virginia, and among the top three in the Shenandoah Valley! Virginia Living magazine has an annual "Best of Virginia" issue and we received accolades again in 2017 for our lifesaving work as one of Virginia's best.

We share this award with our amazing staff, volunteers, and supporters - - so each and every one of you reading this newsletter can know that not only are you making a difference in your support of Cat's Cradle for the cats and kittens of the Shenandoah Valley, but people are well aware of what we are all doing together.

Letter from the Executive Director

It's never dull in the world of animal welfare and rescue - - and certainly not here at Cat's Cradle! Spring and summer bring the challenge and heartbreak of litters of unwanted kittens. We do our best, with our small staff and our dedicated volunteers, and with your financial support, to help them get the care they need and the homes they deserve. We do the same thing when we get calls from owners who have decided they cannot keep their adult cat or the stray cat they have been feeding - - we do our best to help the animals get needed veterinary care and to help the owners/finders rehome those animals, rather than intaking them ourselves. By doing that, we can rescue the animals most in need, those in the shelters, and use our foster homes to care for those cats and kittens.



Jennifer Kirkland

We have exciting news to report in this newsletter - - a second consecutive award from Virginia Living as one of Virginia's Best Charities!!!! We also have the amazing opportunity again this year for a Summertime Challenge fundraiser - - if we raise \$50,000 from July 15-August 16th, an anonymous donor will match those funds!!!! It's a real challenge, but we know we have caring, compassionate supporters to help us reach that goal. PLEASE SAVE THE DATE and make your generous contribution during our challenge. We can't keep on reducing shelter intake through spay/neuter programs without you! We can't rescue cats and kittens from community shelters, provide them care and vetting, and adopt them out to forever homes without you. We can't expand our pet retention programs, which help families keep their pets instead of surrendering them to a shelter, without you. Our budget is \$407,500 this year and almost 90% of that will go directly into program services - we use the money you donate to save lives, it's that simple. But we need your help this summer to make it happen!

We have recently said goodbye to two wonderful staff members because they have each accepted great new opportunities in the world of animal welfare. We shall miss them, and we are grateful for their efforts! We have also welcomed in recent months an amazing new TNR Coordinator. As I said, it's never dull!

Please continue to put your compassion into action by donating and volunteering with Cat's Cradle. I wish you and your family a safe and happy summer.

Jennifer Kirkland
Executive Director



When you shop at Amazon, Amazon will donate back to Cat's Cradle!! Just go to AmazonSmile.com and designate Cat's Cradle as your preferred charity. AmazonSmile is the same site as Amazon—the difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price back to Cat's Cradle! Just designate "Cat's Cradle of the Shenandoah Valley Inc" as your charity of choice when prompted. Just think, now you can purchase all the items you'd usually buy, and you'll be helping cats while doing so!

Updates for 2017

Cats & kittens rescued through mid-May: 357

Adoptions through mid-May: 197

*Transfers Out through mid-May: 110

Spay Neuter Assistance through April: 477

Pet retention clients served through financial assistance for veterinary bills through mid-May: 46

*Transfers Out are cats and kittens transferred out of state to other no-kill rescue organizations that partner with Cat's Cradle to adopt out our foster felines.



Welcome to the team!

Lindy Suster has recently joined the Cat's Cradle staff as our TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) Coordinator. Lindy had volunteered for Cat's Cradle during all four of her years as a student at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, graduating in 2015 with her degree in biotechnology. Lindy will be a huge asset to us as we work to reduce our waiting list of requests for trap/neuter/return assistance from clients who are not able to trap and transport on their own (Cat's Cradle can lend traps and show clients how to trap if they are able.) Lindy is also a genuine Roller Derby Queen - no kidding!



SUMMERTIME

If you believe in our lifesaving mission and want to make the greatest difference possible, Summer 2017 is your moment to seize the day – you know, CATPE DIEM!

Why? As with the last several years, from July 15th to August 16th, an anonymous donor has pledged \$50,000 to us in a dollar for dollar match. This means that if we can raise the same amount via our **Summertime Matching Challenge**, we can finish with an incredible \$100,000 to improve the lives of cats in our community. This challenge is vital to us - - \$100,000 is about 25% of what it will take to fund Cat's Cradle's lifesaving programs in 2017. Will you help us meet this challenge? Your donation goes twice as far during the Summertime Challenge!!! Donations of any amount are welcome and needed during these important days, so please plan to save the date. Tax-deductible contributions can be made online, via check, or even in cash.



CHALLENGE 2017

If you'd like to make a really big splash during the Challenge, please consider stepping up to donate at one of three sponsorship giving levels. In addition to the satisfaction of protecting kitties, gifts of certain amounts will entitle you to specific privileges, namely:

\$500+: "Cat Guard"

- Customized, day of social media devoted exclusively to your sponsorship
- Coverage features photo and/or video highlighting why you support us (if desired)
- Acknowledged by name in any media appearances (TV/radio) regarding the Challenge
- Receive a commemorative "swag" item

\$250-499: Lifesaver

- Receive a Facebook/Instagram *photo* acknowledgement in tandem with donors of the same level
- Receive a commemorative "swag" item

\$150-249: Va-cat-ioner

- Receive a one-time Facebook/Instagram *text* shout-out in tandem with donors of the same range
- Receive a commemorative "swag" item

At any of those sponsorship giving levels, you will enjoy the warm appreciation of our **8,000+ social media followers!** Keep in mind, too, that you can contribute in honor of a friend or loved one – we will follow your lead and tailor our social media output to your preferences. Maybe you have a small business you'd like to promote. Perhaps your child has a summer birthday that you would like to celebrate, or you want to give in tandem with some friends and be acknowledged as a unit. You will also have free reign to share our acknowledgements of your sponsorship on your own pages and via email so that your circles can give in *your* honor.

If you would like to partner with us and plan to donate at one of the Summertime Challenge sponsor levels (and we hope you will!), please email Challenge director Diana Black at diana.ruskin.black@gmail.com

with the subject line "Summertime Challenge" and include your name, the names of anyone else you'd like to jointly give with, the amount you would like to pledge as a sponsor, and any other specific instructions. Thank you so much in advance. We look forward to showcasing your generosity and helping cats twice as much!



Spotlight On Three Of Our Great Volunteers!

Volunteers play an integral role in any nonprofit, but this is especially true for Cat's Cradle. Most of our lifesaving work is done by our wonderful volunteers, making them the lifeblood of our organization. Volunteers are special because they give their time and energy to help others while expecting nothing in return. Our volunteers are especially remarkable because of the extreme passion and dedication that they show to the cats and the families we serve. We want to introduce just three of our volunteers to you in this newsletter.

Jennifer Ybarra is a local jewelry designer who moved to the Harrisonburg area only a year ago. She had previous volunteer experience rescuing cats in Mexico, and wanted to continue that type of work here in Virginia. She mentioned those feelings to some local friends who immediately recommended Cat's Cradle. Jennifer then contacted us and was immediately attracted to our mission and volunteer environment. She quickly found herself a part of something very rewarding.



Jennifer Ybarra

"I can literally see firsthand how the work we do changes the lives of each individual cat saved. I can see their health, mental well-being and every other aspect change for the better, and there is nothing like seeing the pictures of these precious cats with smiling adopters as an end result."

She now works with a lot of our online content, including taking adorable pictures of our cats for the website, and helping with fundraising events. She gets to be a direct part of helping these deserving cats find a family and a home, and loves the people she gets to work with. Seeing so many caring people come together in the pursuit of bettering the lives of animals has taught her a new outlook on life and given her a new hope for humanity. She is incredibly passionate about helping Cat's Cradle, and continuing the mission.

"It has given me further purpose in life. I know that I am doing what I am supposed to be doing in life, and have found the best outlet for me to do it in."



Peggy Downing has been a long time loyal volunteer with Cat's Cradle for over five years. She discovered Cat's Cradle when she went to one of our luncheon fundraisers. She has always been an animal advocate, and that year the shelter in her county had euthanized over 700 cats. She loved that Cat's Cradle works hard to reduce shelter intake and euthanasia and decided to start volunteering with the hope that she could change her county's statistics. She is now one of our foster moms, but she has been involved with multiple aspects of caring for the cats. She is passionate about the work she does for Cat's Cradle, and loves the camaraderie that it provides.

Peggy Downing

Continued on next page

Spotlight Continued

When asked about her favorite moment from volunteering there was one in particular that shined to her. One day Peggy and Christy Tabor, Cat's Cradle's Intake and Foster Coordinator, were going to pull cats from a local shelter and vet them. They decided to take Christy's motor home to make it easier, and they ended up turning it into a mini mobile vetting van!

Her companionship with her fellow volunteers and her love of cats motivates her to continue her passion with Cat's Cradle.

Maria Malerba is the retired head coach of the JMU women's tennis team. When she retired from her long coaching career she wanted to start volunteering. She has a deep love for cats and was especially attracted to Cat's Cradle because of our status as a no kill organization. She has been impressed with the impact we make and the amount of hard work that goes into it. Maria has now been volunteering with Cat's Cradle for over three years, doing a variety of different jobs - - there is just about nothing she won't do, and she keeps us all laughing and smiling in the process!

Maria has had so many cherished and great moments with Cat's Cradle. "Free hugs playtime and kisses with the kitties. You can never be in a bad mood when you are surrounded by lots of cats! Oh, and laughing with Christy, Peggy and Cara."

Maria loves being able to make a difference in the lives of animals, and appreciates all the amazing friendships she's made from her time volunteering. All this motivates Maria to continue her passionate work with Cat's Cradle.



Maria Malerba

We are lucky to have fantastic and unique volunteers such as Jennifer, Peggy, and Maria, but we are always in need of more. Thank you to all of Cat's Cradle's exceptional volunteers. You are all extremely passionate, caring people, and we thank you for all the amazing work you do. We literally couldn't save them without you!

This article was written by our enthusiastic and compassionate communications intern, Samantha Chong.

Goodbye Cara



Cara Tabor left the Cat's Cradle staff on June 4th for a full-time position with Woodworth Animal Hospital in Waynesboro, Virginia. Woodworth is one of our ongoing veterinary practice partners, so Cara will be with a great group! Cara has been a big help to all our kitties as a cleaning and animal care coordinator, and has assisted our amazing Intake and Foster Coordinator, Christy Tabor, with vetting and record keeping. Cara has also developed our foster orientation program, and we're happy to say she'll continue to volunteer for Cat's Cradle's foster program!



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Matt Chan

Goodbye Matt Chan

After almost five and 1/2 years as the Adoption & Volunteer Coordinator for Cat's Cradle, Matt Chan left us on May 27th to pursue an exciting professional opportunity in animal welfare in South Carolina. We'll let him tell you about it. Though Matt will be missed by feline and human friends alike, all of us at Cat's Cradle are very grateful for his efforts on behalf of the cats and communities we serve. We wish him the best in his future endeavors!

Dear Friends,

I would like to thank you for all of your amazing support towards Cat's Cradle. Every year that I have been with Cat's Cradle, I have seen your support help us save more and more lives. In June, I will be relocating to Charleston, South Carolina to join a no kill shelter, Charleston Animal Society, as an Executive Leader Fellow, a one-year position made possible by Maddie's Fund. The Fellowship will allow me to continue to progress in animal welfare while assisting with a number of special projects in the no kill community of Charleston, as they prepare to lead South Carolina to become the first no kill state in the United States.

I want to thank every one of our very special supporters and Cat's Cradle volunteers, fosters, and staff for sharing in this experience with me over the last several years. Saving cats, helping sick and injured cats get well, matching up cats with the perfect family, and working with an amazing team as Adoption & Volunteer Coordinator for Cat's Cradle has been my honor. I will miss you, and the cats; yet I know that they will be in good hands. I look forward to seeing all the amazing things this community will continue do for the animals!

*All my best,
Matt*



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