



Stevens County Cat Care

April 2012 Kit-E-News

**Our next clinic:
May 6th in Chewelah**

Our volunteers and veterinarians hold mobile clinics in a different town's community center one Sunday each month. Our low cost mobile clinics are made possible thanks to the generosity of local veterinarians, grants, and local donations. Low income Stevens County residents may call

(509) 935-MEOW (6369)

to make reservations for their cat(s) at an upcoming clinic.

Check out our website in progress at www.stevenscountycatcare.org

Gardening Without Help From The Cats

The *Coleus Canina* plant, a weed originating in Europe, is known as the "Scardy-Cat" or "Pee-off" plant because it emits an odor offensive to cats (but not to humans) and deters their presence. Recommendation is to plant them three feet apart around the area to be protected. WARNING: There are many varieties of *Coleus* plants, so make sure you order the correct one - *Coleus Canina*.

For protecting gardens or flower beds, effective kitchen items include the herb rue, either planted or sprinkled in its dry form. Other suggestions for garden areas are orange and lemon peels (cats dislike citrus smells), cayenne pepper, coffee grounds, pipe tobacco, lavender oil, lemon grass oil, citronella oil, peppermint oil, eucalyptus oil, mustard oil, capsaicin, pepper and oil of mustard. Remember, these must be reapplied regularly (every week or so) and also need to be reapplied after rain or new growth.

Motion activated sprinklers use infra-red to detect when an animal enters a defined territory. When a cat enters the infra-red field, the sprinkler shoots out a burst of water for a few seconds in the general direction of the animal. The effect is to frighten the cats rather than soak them, but they quickly learn not to enter the area. After a while, the sprinkler becomes unnecessary.



A motion sensor, upon being triggered, emits a high-frequency alarm imperceptible to humans but highly annoying and startling to cats. The key with ultrasonic devices is to make sure you have enough of them for the size of the area you're trying to exclude the cats from. Read the instructions to know how many you would need for your area.

Volunteering with Tina:

Shannon Taylor is one of SCCCs dedicated volunteers. Our Sunday clinics usually find her cleaning crates, a nasty job she is always happy to help with. However, Shannon's dedication to the animal



population goes far beyond "Weekend Warrior" status and we divided her interview into two segments, with this being the second part.

During a Sunday SCCC clinic, Shannon often arrives around noon. Not because she isn't a morning person, but because she is rounding up cats to bring for along. She traps ferals and also transports cats for others. Shannon is directly responsible for fixing a great many cats that would otherwise be reproducing unwanted kittens.

Another reason for Shannon arriving later than many volunteers is the sheer volume of work involved with her own animals. She spends at least 3 hours in the morning alone doing animal related chores. Shannon receives heartwarming blessings from her animals but in her own words her finances have "gone to the dogs".

Shannon has stepped in to give a home to dogs and cats in crisis that have no other option. *Shannon is emphatically not a rescue.* She feels badly that she has so many animals that she is unable to give them the individual attention she feels is important. However, Shannon has given indefinite, and often permanent, homes to creatures that would otherwise be disposed of.

Her population of both dogs and cats increased dramatically in the past year or so, beginning when she got a man's cat spayed through SCCC for him, but he didn't want its 6 kittens. Then there were 5 kittens under the trailer of a neighbor who left them when she moved. Then 2 kittens were found abandoned along the road. All of her other cats, like the 13 kittens, are rescues of one sort or another.

Like the cats, Shannon's dogs all have a sad story in their past. Like the Terrier-Chihuahua mix found in an ice chest after someone tried to kill her with a hammer. Last year she was involved in a personal rescue operation in the rural Springdale area which brought her dog count up to 26.

Shannon tries to find good homes for these animals. Dogs must go to homes with fenced

yards and, most importantly, Shannon needs to know the dogs and cats she adopts out will be treated as family members and have permanent caring homes.



I have had the pleasure of visiting Shannon at her home and can tell you that in spite of the numbers, her set up is quite nice. Nothing fancy, but everything is functional and adequate. The big dog kennel for one pack connects to a quarter acre fenced yard with many trees for shade. There is another fenced yard and several kennels for the dogs.

There is a heated cat room for one group of kitties. There is another separate cat building that connects to an outdoor enclosure for the "messy" cats; those that do not use litter boxes properly. Shannon's other group (of more polite kitties) have house privileges. There is also another outdoor enclosure the house cats can use. One elderly cat was blissfully sleeping in a sunny spot outside while I was there.

Shannon sees her work with rescued animals as necessary but time consuming and expensive. While one cannot change the past, the future for animals can be changed by responsible ownership. This includes a commitment to spay/neuter pets so that their offspring don't become more unwanted creatures for the Shannons of the world to care for.



Things you always wanted to know but were afraid to ask your cat.

Did you know that Washington state changed its rabies law this year? All owned dogs, cats, and ferrets are now required to have current rabies vaccinations. While a few states do have a medical exemption clause for the sick or elderly, Washington state is currently not one of them.

What do YOU look for in a cat?

What people looked for in cats

Behavior with people: 77.9%

Physical appearance: 65.6%

Age: 63.9%

What people looked for in kittens

Age: 78.1%

Behavior with people: 69.3%

Physical appearance: 62.8%



Each year a disproportionately large number of black cats are euthanized at shelters because they're passed over by potential adopters.

Three to four million cats are surrendered to shelters every year in the United States alone, which means that an enormous number of cats are euthanized or live out their lives in cages. Black cats are more likely to be among the unlucky ones.

A recent study polled 1500 pet owners, asking what had made them decide their pet was 'the' one. Cats had it easier than dogs. While kittens had a better chance of being adopted than adult cats, over all, cats were more likely to be chosen for how they interacted with people than just being gorgeous.



Various animal rescue organizations have noted that black cats are at a significant disadvantage when it comes to adoption. A 2002 California study found that black cats were only half as likely to find loving homes as tabbies, and two-thirds less likely to be adopted than cats with white fur. Given that overall adoption rates were just 20% for all shelter cats, black cats have particularly bleak odds.

Meet Mac and Mimi-



The story continues: Our story began with Mac and Mimi coming to America. Living in a large sanctuary in Taiwan, they were not considered adoptable after having had their eyes removed because of infections.

"Mimi Uses the Cell Phone"

One of Mimi's more notable accomplishments is the fact that she figured out the kitchen counters even existed in the first place, and then even more notable is the fact she figured out how to get up on them.

One can suppose that since she cannot see, she simply smelled good things on a level higher than herself and decided to investigate. Like most kitchens, ours comes equipped with a counter top complete with cupboards with doors and drawers. Each one, of course, has a handle. At one end of the kitchen, the handles on the drawers beneath the counter all line up perfectly, making the purrfect ladder.

Mimi learned to climb up the drawer handles to the counter where she found enough small treasures to encourage her to become a repeat offender. Pens! Pencils! Various small items awaiting a permanent location, such as a baby sock. Rubber bands and twist ties, oh, Mimi was in pure heaven. Every night she climbed the drawer handle ladder up to the mysterious world above her and searched through unseen items until she would find an old favorite such as the baby sock or a rubber band and jump down to the floor with her treasure in her mouth and trot up the stairs and hide it in plain sight.

One night Mimi found a strange item on the counter- my husband's new cell phone.



Now this wasn't just any cell phone, this was a (then) new Droid, recently purchased by my husband who fantasized over the TV commercials until he could no longer resist the temptation to buy the latest and greatest. Alas, he and I are of the age where new technology is sometimes a bit much for us and his new toy became something from his nightmares. He fought it. He cursed it. He made unintentional calls with it. It hung up on people. The alarm went off at unpredictable times. Or not. The Droid had a mind of its own.

So one day when a friend called and asked my husband what he had wanted at 2:30 in the morning when he called the night before, we were baffled. Hubby argued that he didn't make the call. However, caller ID does not lie and it soon became obvious that the 2:30 a.m. call had indeed happened as accused. But how? We were in bed asleep and the phone was downstairs. On the kitchen counter. Mimi?

We've all heard the joke that 'a dog ate my homework'. But now we can honestly say that our blind cat calls people in the middle of the night with the cell phone. Of course hubby did not appreciate my pointing out the obvious to me fact that the cat was smarter than him and had also learned to use the phone much faster.

The Droid has since passed on to cell phone heaven, having been replaced by the most recent latest and greatest on the cell phone market. And so far, thankfully, there have been no more late night 'cat calls'.

