



# Holiday 2020

Dear Friend of the Pet Paw-See,



In this season of joyous giving, we thank all of our volunteers, foster families and donors for the much-needed gifts of time, compassion, and funds they give throughout the year for the care of the abandoned and abused felines in our community. Many thanks also to the generous people who open their hearts and their homes to give these pets the loving homes they deserve.

## Fruity and Paws: A Second Chance at Life

**In November 2019, we were contacted by a hunter who had found a cat in desperate need of help in a remote area near Stanford.**

Fruity was estimated to be 12 years old, and was dehydrated, emaciated at a mere four pounds, and had severe dental decay necessitating a full extraction of his teeth. There was no doubt that he wouldn't have survived much longer on his own, and certainly would not have been able to weather another brutal Montana winter.

Pet Paw-see thought that he was likely feral, but could not turn a blind eye to his suffering. We immediately initiated vet care and, when he was well enough, placed him in a foster home. **Acclimating to domestic life was difficult for Fruity. He shied away from human interaction. He meowed mournfully at night. His foster family worked tirelessly to help him adjust, but nothing seemed to make him happy.** His health improved, he more than doubled his weight, and then he discovered his own personal bit of heaven: a cat stroller. His foster family began taking him out on nightly walks in the stroller hoping to whet his appetite for his former life and, sure enough, Fruity was in his glory. With time, Fruity began to tolerate humans, and dare we say, to enjoy snuggling with his foster mom and dad and giving head butts! Fruity is still waiting for his forever home and yet we undoubtedly believe his miraculous transformation is a true success.

**In August 2020, an Ulm resident called us for a stray cat who also needed serious medical care.** Paws, named for his unique polydactyl feet, was a senior who had clearly had a difficult life—the tips of his ears had been eaten away by frostbite, his eye was injured, his fur was so painfully matted that he had to be shaved, and he too would need all of his teeth removed. Despite his apparent neglect and pain, Paws is a loving, gentle boy. We found out that he had quite the story to tell—Paws, formerly known as Doug, had grown up in Belt until his owner became unable to care for him due to health issues.

A friend of Paws' owner rehomed him to a family in Ulm who then let him free roam. When the friend learned that they had put Paws outside, he began searching and eventually found Paws with us. They adopted Paws, vowing to keep him inside. Tragically, we just learned that Paws is in kidney failure, but we are thankful that his forever family is providing him medical care and keeping him comfortable.

**We take solace in the fact that Paws will live out the rest of his days basking in the warmth and love of an indoor home, enjoying the luxuries of a housecat life rather than merely enduring a brutal existence in the outdoors, dying alone.**

**We were fortunate to be able to give Fruity and Paws a second chance at life. Rescues like these would be impossible without the help of our generous donors, foster families, and volunteers.**



*Fruity is available!*



**Thank you for helping me.**



## “B” a Foster, “B” a Hero



In May 2020, Pet Paw-see received a call regarding a litter of four kittens who had been removed from their mother. At only

one or two weeks old, we knew that these babies would likely die without intervention. The kittens were placed with a foster family who began the arduous job of raising “bottle babies.”

They were bottle-fed every two to three hours and then stimulated to go to the bathroom (the result of which would sometimes require a full bath afterwards!). Thanks to their selfless foster family, these kittens thrived and the “B” litter, as they were affectionately called, went in pairs to their new homes.

These kittens were lucky, but there are many other who are not. This year, we have had to turn away numerous litters of bottle babies. This breaks our heart, but the reality is that bottle babies are a very labor-intensive undertaking that requires dedication and a time commitment that few can do. It's not just waking throughout the night to feed them, but it's also ensuring they receive feedings throughout the day—an impossible task for anyone that works a traditional full-time job. They also need close monitoring for weight gain and medical issues because at that age, one small problem can quickly spiral into a catastrophe.

**This year, we had roughly ten foster homes in which to place cats and some of these homes fostered multiple cats or litters at a time! We are always seeking new foster families to help us rescue more felines.**

Whether you feel up to the challenge of bottle babies, or you'd like a more lowkey foster like a senior or a cat recovering from medical care, we're sure we can find a foster for you! It is a very rewarding experience.



Bennett



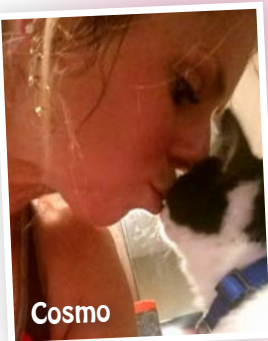
Baylor



Bowie



Brinkley



Cosmo



### So many more tales to tell ...

Febbie, our snow angel, and sweet little Chickadee have rescue stories we've published on our website:

[Petpaw-see.com](http://Petpaw-see.com)

## Hope for the Best, Prepare for the Worst

At Pet Paw-see, we sincerely hope that every adoptive family is a forever family. However, we also understand that life happens and circumstances can change in an instant. All too often, this can lead to beloved family pets being dumped, which can be a death sentence for an indoor cat who lacks survival instincts. **Whether you lose your job and can't afford your pet any longer, or the unthinkable happens and you pass away unexpectedly, it is crucial to have a plan for your pet(s).**

For this reason, we have a return clause in our adoption contract which states that if the adopter ever finds themselves in a position where they are unable to care for the cat for any reason, they can return the cat back to us, no questions asked. In 2020, the year in which life probably could not have been more unpredictable, we have had around a dozen cats and two dogs returned to us. Most have gone on to start their second chapter in a new forever home.

Some though, such as **Prue and Maizy, have not been so lucky. These girls have been back with Pet Paw-see for over a year, patiently biding their time, waiting for that serendipitous moment when their new family finds them.**

Prue has adjusted and come out of her shell, thinking that the PetSmart habitat is her new home. On the other hand, Maizy sits in the corner of the habitat, staring intently at every passerby, hoping that they might be her ticket home.

So next time you're looking to add to your furry family, please don't hesitate to consider one of our returned felines. Don't automatically assume the cat was returned due to negative behavior. This is rarely the case. Instead these cats are usually the unfortunate victims of their owners finding themselves down on their luck with nowhere to turn, and these sweet kitties would love nothing more than a final forever home.



Maizy



Birch



Prue



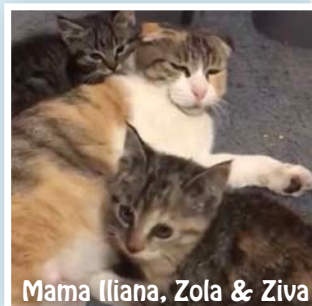


## Operation Scottish Fold

**Sometimes rescue is as simple as getting a stray cat off the street. Other times, it is akin to a covert law enforcement operation.** This is the situation we found ourselves in early October when we were informed that several adult Scottish Folds had been dumped, carrier and all, amongst piles of garbage and brush. We swiftly moved in to action, setting up humane traps in an attempt to get these cats help.

We initially trapped three adults, all tame and clearly housecats prior to their abandonment. Two were Scottish Folds (Isley and Momma Iliana) and one was a black cat (Momma Maria). We were thrilled ... until the vet informed us that Iliana and Maria had recently been pregnant and may still have nursing kittens out there somewhere. We kept Isley and Maria to get them fixed, but took Iliana back to the property. We set up a game camera and reluctantly released Iliana in hopes that she would lure the babies in. While our strategy worked and we started spying the kittens on the camera, they had been born feral and were very wary of our tricks! After a couple weeks of no success and the threat of winter weather looming, we made the difficult decision to trap Iliana again, hoping it would make the kittens more likely to go into the traps for food.

**Over the next week, we trapped two of the three kittens we had seen on the camera.** They were elated to be reunited with their mother. We continued to surveil the property, praying we would find that elusive third baby, but to no avail. Then, we received a call from



Mama Iliana, Zola & Ziva

the administrator of a nearby business who learned of our trapping effort and informed us that he had found not one, but TWO, little spitfire kittens by his dumpster, one of which matched the description of the kitten we had been searching for! It seems the crafty Momma Iliana had begun to move her babies to what she felt was safer ground! The next day, one

of our volunteers who spearheaded the rescue effort trapped those two remaining kittens, just as a perilous winter storm moved in, bringing below zero temperatures and nearly a foot of snow—conditions which these babies would have never survived. The administrator adopted one kitten, and we took the other kitten into our care, reuniting her with her mother and siblings.

**Rescue isn't always easy, and in this case in particular, it took a team of more than half a dozen volunteers feeding, monitoring the game camera, and checking the traps—even at 2am—over the period of three weeks, just to save these seven cats.** Helping the homeless and stray cats in Great Falls is truly a community effort and starts with the basics of responsible

pet ownership: don't let your cats free roam, don't abandon your pets, and most importantly—spay and neuter ASAP! If the five females we trapped from this property had been allowed to reproduce unchecked, they would have had an estimated 75 kittens over the next year, all feral and born into a life

they did not ask for and in which they would struggle to exist. If you can't afford to fix your cat, there is a local organization that can help connect you with low-cost spay/neuter options. Help us help the cats by being part of the solution, not part of the problem!



Zena



Ziva

## Reunited and It Feels So Good

**Pet Paw-see has been able to reunite three cats with their owners thus far in 2020.**

One was with us for only a few days, but the rest were with us for weeks until their owners tracked them down. Had these cats been microchipped, we would have been able to facilitate reunification immediately.

Furthermore, these cats are an excellent example as to why you should not allow your cats to free roam. These felines were fortunate that they were found and brought to us by concerned citizens with good intentions—many other cats are not so lucky and meet a much worse fate! Your cats rely on YOU to keep them safe so don't let them down; their life may truly be on the line!



Cotton-Eye Joe



Roland



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### SPECIAL NEEDS

*Handsome tuxedo cat Roland was rescued just before October's record-shattering cold and snow. He's a friendly boy that tested FIV+. Sneekers is another sweetie. He has IBS but does well on his special food and daily brushings.*

*Read more about these felines on our website: [petpaw-see.com](http://petpaw-see.com)*



Sneekers

**From January 1 through October 25, we took in 41 cats and 58 kittens, and adopted 43 cats and 55 kittens into loving homes.**

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in our adopt-a-thons being cancelled for months and a temporary shutdown of the Petco habitat which led to a 49 % decrease in adoption rates compared to 2019—it's hard to get our fine felines adopted when they are unable to charm the public in person!

Sadly, this means we've also had to decrease our intakes because we can't bring in more felines if we have nowhere to put them.

***This is why our foster families are so crucial to our success.***

If you've ever considered fostering, please call us! It's an act of kindness that you will never regret as that tiny orphaned foster kitten cuddles on your chest, gazing adoringly into your eyes as it purrs up a storm, thankful to be warm, safe, and fed.

In June, we increased our adoption fees to \$90 for cats and \$100 for kittens which was met with some criticism. However, we

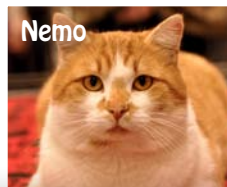
felt it was a critical move, necessary to sustain our life-saving efforts. It's also a bargain considering all of our cats receive a spay/neuter, basic vaccinations, FIV/FelV testing, and microchipping prior to adoption—an average cost of more than \$300.

**Through late October, our vet bills totaled \$35,402.26 and our boarding costs were \$5,749.99.**

Though we've been blessed to work with compassionate and generous vets and boarding facilities in our community, we don't shy away from taking in the ill, injured, or special needs cats, which inevitably leads to some very high costs. For example, numerous cats this year have required full dental extractions, some require special diets and/or ongoing medications to treat chronic conditions (like senior gentleman Sneekers who suffers from IBS), and others need to be closely monitored and treated for health conditions (such as FelV-positive Nemo and FIV-positive Geyser).



Gilly



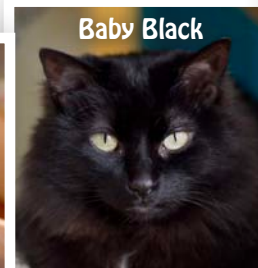
Nemo



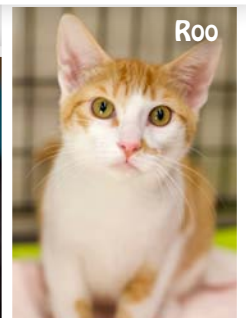
Geyser



Lewis



Baby Black



Roo

Without a doubt, 2020 has been a rough year for all of us, but we feel fortunate and thankful for the support of our community which has allowed us to continue our mission of rescuing the abandoned, abused, neglected, and forgotten felines of Cascade County and beyond.



Ambrosia's EIGHT kittens!

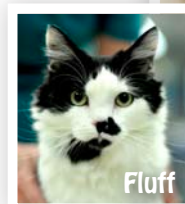
Without your help, it would be impossible. ***There are many ways that you can be a hero to these cats and facilitate their rescue.*** If you are interested in making a tax-deductible donation, you can mail a check, or donate online through our website or Venmo. You can also donate items from our Amazon Wish List, or, perhaps, the easiest thing of all, select us as your Amazon Smile charity—a portion of every Amazon purchase you make will be donated to us.

***If you're looking for a more hands-on opportunity to be involved, call us!*** We could always use more volunteers and foster families, as they are the backbone of Pet Paw-see. Whichever way you support us, no action is too small and we are truly grateful!

For the animals,

Leslie Raynes,  
Pet Paw-see Founder

For more information, please call 406.231.1132.



Fluff



Chubbs