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Paws for Thought by Dr. Tami Rogers

On January 2, our clinic had the privilege of participating in a wonderful event aimed at improving the quality of life for two very lucky kittens.

On a regular basis, I spay and neuter kittens for CATS—Committed Alliance to Strays—at no cost to them. Throughout 2014, I was able to spay 50 female cats and neuter 69 males with services valued at over \$14,000. CATS is only one of the local organizations that we donate time and services to as a clinic and our involvement with them is simple—they are an exceptional organization with great commitment to the animals under their care.

In early December, two kittens were brought to Jacksonville Veterinary Hospital for routine spay and neuter procedures through CATS. However, it was evident that these two kittens had additional and bigger problems. Both kittens were born with “eyelid agenesis,” a condition where a portion of the upper eyelid does not form. The eyelids aid in tear production but are also essential for protection of the eye itself via blinking. As neither of these kittens had the ability to blink, their eyes were left susceptible to repeat injury, ultimately leaving the male blind and the female at risk for serious injury and future blindness. The male has adapted to this handicap amazingly, his other senses dramatically sensitized and compensating remarkably for the loss of sight. He also obviously uses his sister as his eyes, following her every lead.

I had never seen this condition before, was perplexed about how to proceed, and frankly felt that their prognosis was very guarded. Luckily, a board certified

Lucky Litter Mates

veterinary ophthalmologist, **Dr. Cassandra Bliss**, moved to the Medford area about 3 months ago. Prior to her arrival, serious eye conditions outside of our scope of practice had to be referred to Eugene or Portland for attention. I consulted with Dr. Bliss who generously offered to donate her time and expertise to correct the problem for both kittens. On January 2, 2015 she visited our clinic to help correct the abnormalities.

The female kitten, “Monique,” underwent a complicated procedure called a Lip-to-Lid transposition where a portion of the upper lip is used to replace the missing eyelid. In time, the nerves that normally innervate the eyelids will grow into the replaced lip tissue which will allow her to blink normally. She was also spayed after completion of the eyelid surgery. The male kitten, “Sies,” had both of non-visionary eyes removed and replaced by ocular prosthetics which will prevent unnecessary injury and pain in the future.

Overall, the prognosis for both kittens is wonderful. They have an opportunity to live completely different lives because of the procedures performed. I am thankful that I had the opportunity to be part of such a wonderful event and I owe a huge thanks to Dr. Cassandra Bliss for coming to our hospital and donating her time. Because of her expertise and teaching, if I ever encounter this condition in the future, I will know how to address it and be capable of performing the procedure.

Dr. Rogers can be reached at the Jacksonville Veterinary Hospital at 541-899-1081 or jvhospital@questoffice.net. See ad this page.



Sanctuary One Announces Exciting Expansions in 2015

by Westi Haughey, Sanctuary One Board Member & Volunteer

Sanctuary One, a care farm in the Applegate Valley, knows that people, animals and the earth are better together. When one is healed, all are healed, because we are interconnected. This mission will get a big boost in 2015 as the Sanctuary makes two great expansions.

As a nonprofit organization, it's rare to have a donor approach you with 100 percent of the funds necessary to complete a project your organization had only dreamed about. Luckily for Sanctuary One, that's precisely what happened a few months ago.

The story starts one year earlier when a mother, Kristina Driscoll, her son Wills, and goddaughter Alicia Theophil, rescued a stray cat, Astro, who tested positive for FIV. Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) is in the same class as HIV and can cause weakening of a cat's immune system. Kristina's family educated themselves about FIV and learned that with proper diet and medical care, FIV-positive cats can lead healthy, normal lives. Unfortunately, when cats turn up FIV-positive in a shelter setting they are typically euthanized to reduce risk of transmission and medical costs, or to free-up space for more adoptable cats. After working very hard to save Astro, Kristina, Wills and Alicia felt compelled to become involved in the welfare of FIV-positive cats and approached Sanctuary One about building a safe haven for these special felines.

Part of the Sanctuary's mission includes caring for animals that are neglected, abused, forgotten, or misunderstood—building a facility to care for FIV-positive cats does exactly that. The **Wills Driscoll and Alicia Theophil FIV Cat Cottage** will complement the

existing cat cottage at Sanctuary One, but house the FIV-positive and negative felines separately, ensuring safe, comfortable conditions for both populations while eliminating the chance for the virus to spread. Because education is an important aspect of the Sanctuary's mission, visitors will be able to meet the FIV-positive cats and learn about the many myths surrounding FIV.

Another exciting change at Sanctuary One will be the expansion of the 35,000-foot organic permaculture garden. In 2014, the Sanctuary grew enough produce to host a booth at the Jacksonville Farmers Market, but the garden suffered serious damage after multiple invasions by hungry deer—a plight all too familiar to many Valley residents. Although over the years the garden was transformed from barren rocky earth to rich, vital soil, funding for permanent deer-proof fencing proved elusive. Finally, through a generous donation, the Sanctuary will not only be expanding the garden, but installing permanent deer fencing around the entire perimeter. The garden will be tended by local school groups, including Ruch Elementary and Armadillo Technical Institute, under the guidance of Sanctuary staff. The staff and volunteers expect to get their hands dirty and grow the greatest harvest in the Sanctuary's history!

But the new and exciting additions won't truly be complete until they're shared with the community. **Sanctuary One's 2015 tour season will begin Saturday, April 25.** Tours are offered every Wednesday and Saturday at 10:30am. Those interested in taking a tour can call the Sanctuary to make a reservation at 541-899-8627 or visit sanctuaryone.org.





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