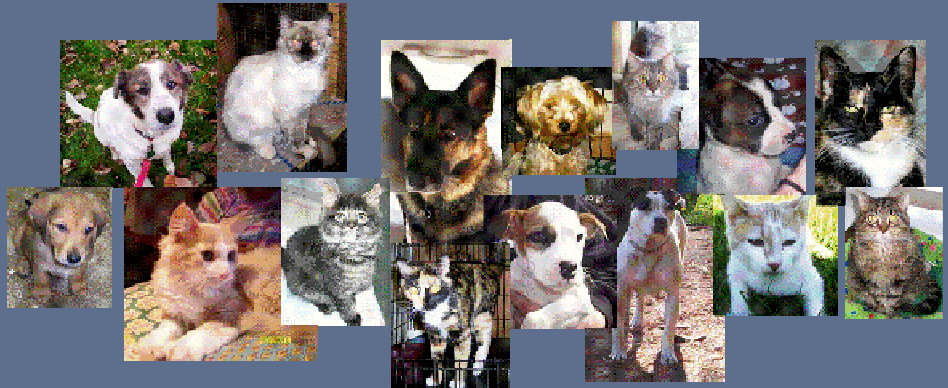




Where Happy Endings Begin!



Help us count the reasons . . .

Here are just two of the hundreds of reasons we're so thankful for all our donors and supporters, not just now during the holiday giving season, but all year round. Two gunshot victims were brought in within the last two months separately, but incurring the same senseless pain.

There are far too many cases of abuse, abandonment and neglect to present here, so we chose these two most recent to illustrate how much you all have helped. Without you, these two pets would have been euthanized when brought to the county shelter. There just aren't funds to deal with severe injuries.

These two victims showed us their sweet temperaments even while in pain, and we knew they had to be saved.

We took them in for emergency medical treatment and sent out pleas for help with their surgery costs. And, as always, you stepped right up to lend a hand to both Sydney and Naomi.

Donors from as far away as the United Kingdom helped us pay for the necessary surgeries. As you can see, both animals required amputation of a limb,

but they both adapted quickly to their new status and went right on being lovable and healthy pets. Both are doing great and hopefully are in their new forever homes by the time you read this.

The stories are unending, but for every horror story, there are stories like Sydney's and Naomi's who have been pulled back from the edge and given a new chance to finish their lives. And it's only possible because of you, the animal lovers who support Safe Haven's mission of helping abandoned pets and finding them forever homes.

Because of you, we were able to help triple the number of cats and kittens adopted from the Ionia County Animal Shelter from June to the present by paying for the sterilization of each feline adopted. And, of course, the numbers of cats and kittens euthanized was reduced to almost nothing compared to past years.

Because of you we were able to rescue, sterilize, supply medical treatment, and find homes for almost 300 abandoned animals so far this year.

We rescue, we educate, we spay and neuter wherever we

can, and it's all because of you. Thank you for all that you do to help the animals.

Have a warm and wonderful holiday season with your family and friends.

Survivors

This is Sydney (named by staff), before and after her amputation.



And this is Naomi, swollen injured leg before surgery and resting comfortably after.





Maggie's fairy tale



Clever Mason of Fox Haven

Hello, dear friends, I'm Clever Mason of Fox Haven. I'm here to tell you a story, a heart-warming tale of joy and cheer to brighten your Christmas. So get comfortable -- pull up a chair in front of the fire, and listen to the true fairy tale of a princess named Maggie.

Once upon a time, a little yellow puppy came into this world, and, as puppies do, she grew and she grew, bigger and bigger. One day, the young yellow dog found herself far away from home and in serious trouble, abandoned and alone in an animal shelter up north. Sick, dehydrated, and emaciated, the forlorn yellow dog prepared to die. She

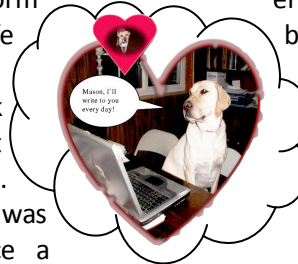


Emaciated Maggie arrives at Safe Haven

watched and waited as people walked by her kennel, hoping that someone would stop and claim her. No one did. Strangers hurried past, averting their eyes from the dog's gaunt body and sunken eyes. She heard someone say, "That Yellow Lab's going to die soon—put her on the list for next Monday, if she makes it until then."

Then a gentle voice said, "Poor girl. You need help. Hang in there—I'll be back!" A wonderful young dog trainer named Rebecca, vacationing in the area, happened to walk into the shelter at exactly the right moment. Rebecca Dence called her friend, Sue Hinz, the Yellow Lab foster mom for Safe Haven Humane Society. Sue called Beth Wellman at the Ionia County Animal Shelter. The three fairy dogmothers waved their magic wands and saved the sick, scrawny yellow dog from certain death that weekend. But the fragile yellow dog suffered from heartworm and starvation; her life hung by a thread.

Sue welcomed the sick yellow dog into her heart and into her home, as did I. You see, dear friends, I was



once a Safe Haven foster dog, too, until Sue adopted me as her own. When Sue introduced me to the "new girl," I gasped, horrified and

shocked—a walking skeleton. Then I looked into her gentle brown eyes and saw hope, trust, and a strong will to live. "What's your name?" I asked softly. She replied, "Maggie," smiling and wagging her tail happily. I loved her at first sight.



Healthy Maggie smiles at Sue and Mason as she leaves to go to Chad and Anne's house as the newest member of their family.

Sue carefully fed Maggie a special diet, and she bloomed from forty-eight pounds to almost ninety pounds. A kind friend, Julie Bukrey, paid for Maggie's heartworm treatment, from which Maggie fully recovered. And I became Maggie's best friend forever. Like all fairy tales, Maggie's story had a happy ending. Chad and Anne Hiller adopted Maggie and gave her a loving forever home.

Dear friends, fairy tales can come true. Princess Maggie will live happily ever after, thanks to people like you.

By the way, you can find me on Facebook. Just look for me, Clever Mason of Fox Haven, and "Like" me to become my friend.



Sue teaches Maggie how to use the computer so she can stay in touch with Mason on Facebook.

A thought for the New Year

Here's a very easy way to help the animals: If your employer participates with United Way by payroll deduction, you can write in a charity of your choice. Please think about adding Safe Haven Humane Society to your list of favorite recipients. Remember, we have no paid staff or administrative costs so the animals are the beneficiaries of your giving.

Hard work and fun!

We raised just over \$2,000 at our annual Christmas wreath sale this year. We sold 342 wreaths, 28 of which were donated by Tom and Ameer at Mathisen Tree Farms. Thank you Tom and Ameer!

Pictures with Santa at Tractor Supply in Ionia was a huge success and one of our most fun events. Families with kids (with and without fur) sat for 72 photos! Thank you Tractor Supply for being a wonderful, generous host. And thank you to Todd Urbanski – I mean Santa – for helping us have this much fun while raising money for the animals!



What did you like best about this issue? What topic would you like to see covered in an upcoming issue? Put your comments below.

Here are some ways you can help Safe Haven animals:

Donate: My check made payable to Safe Haven Humane Society is enclosed for

\$20 \$30 \$50 \$100 Other _____

(you can also donate online at www.shhs pets.com)

Foster. Please send me information about fostering cats or dogs

Become a member of Safe Haven: \$10 individual or \$18 family

Other:

Help transport animals

Hold or help with fundraiser

Other _____

Thank you for helping us!



cut out and mail
this form to:
Safe Haven Humane Society
P.O. Box 55
Ionia, MI 48846



Your comments. Thank you. _____

Why should kitty stay indoors?

Is it cruel to keep your cat indoors when all the butterflies, birds and bugs are outside? Isn't a cat's natural instinct to prowl and hunt through the weeds, crouch low and pounce on unsuspecting prey? It isn't any more cruel to keep him inside than it is to keep your children from playing in the street or climbing on the roof.

People tell us all the time "My cat really wants to go outside. I just can't keep him in." What the cat is demonstrating is its natural curiosity and lack of judgment; its lack of knowledge of what's really out there. But you know what's out there.

To begin with, look at Naomi and Sydney on our front page. Whether these two were victims of accidents or of deliberate ruthlessness, it represents the dangers facing pets outside. And of course the gun is just

one of the tools used by those who have no moral restraint against harming animals. Let's add traps, poisons, cars . . . a whole array of common weapons.

Then there are diseases spread by less fortunate animals, strays and wild cats (those born in the wild are known as ferals). These animals may be carrying viruses, feline leukemia, and feline aids (FIV). Some of these diseases can be vaccinated against, and some cannot. Some are difficult to pass on

and some are very easy. Many diseases are spread by bite wounds — unneutered male cats can be very territorial and aggressive and may attack other cats they encounter.

And of course there are dogs with high prey drives and other predators (coyotes and birds of prey, such as hawks and owls) who pose a danger to your cat. Some attack for food and some for sport, but it's your cat they're after.

So, think about it: Is it cruel to keep your cat inside safe, warm and loved, with toys for stimulation and lots of room to run around, maybe a window perch or hammock to sit on and watch the birds outside? Or is it cruel to expose it to the dangers outside just because it doesn't know any better and is only responding to primitive instincts and curiosity?



Smart indoor cats enjoying a game of chess



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"Where Happy Endings Begin!"

If you would prefer not to receive future copies of our newsletter, please call or email us and let us know.

"Pet" Peeves — what are yours?

In our last issue, we asked you to let us know what your "pet" peeves are . . . things you see people do with their pets that annoy you or downright enrage you. Here are some of the comments sent to us. Thank you so much for taking the time to let us know.

- 🐕 Dogs chained outside to their doghouses 24/7, especially those far away from the house (why have a dog?).
- 🐕 Dogs riding in the back of pickup trucks.
- 🐕 Pets taken to outdoor events in the summer when the blacktop is hot.

- 🐕 Dogs left in cars in the summer — even with windows cracked, there's not enough ventilation. It only takes a few minutes for the inside of the car to exceed 100 degrees, even though it's only 70-80 outside.

- 🐕 People who breed designer dogs when there are so many nice, lovable dogs at the shelter.

Keep sending us your "Pet Peeves" and we'll keep publishing them. We might all learn something.

