



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
HUMANE SOCIETY**
— COMPASSION IS OUR CAUSE —

Animail

SPRING 2007



lynda jones-burnes & family

pet friendly places—discover where your pets are welcome
easter's no fun for a real bun, make mine chocolate!
the real deal on the "teacup" trend
who's standing up for the animals—introducing captain allen



Foster Homes

Giving little lives a little more time

The MCHS Foster Program consists of over 200 volunteer foster parents who provide temporary homes for over 250 stray and surrendered animals of all types that enter the shelter. Fostering is an act of generosity in terms of patience and time and a rewarding experience that saves two lives, the life of the animal you are fostering, and the space that opens up for a new one at the shelter. Have you ever thought about fostering?

We interviewed Eden Tullius, Feline Focus Committee (FFC) member and cat room volunteer, about her experience as a foster parent. Eden started fostering about a year and a half ago and in that time she's fostered about 20 cats and kittens!

Foster Staff (FS): When you started fostering, how much experience did you have?

Eden Tullius (ET): I was really just your garden-variety pet owner. I've loved cats all my life and have three of my own, but it's been very much "on-the-job" training.

I know that Foster Buddies, the mentoring program which started several months ago, is helping many new foster parents. I think it's a great addition to the Foster Care Program.

(FS): Explain to our readers how foster parents choose their foster animals.

(ET): The foster staff keeps an updated list of candidates for the Foster Care Program. They periodically call and email foster parents to see if any of the animals work for their situation. The foster parents decide what animal(s), if any, they choose to take.

My preference is older kittens, so I usually foster them, but I have had very young kittens and adults as well. It's just a matter of who needs me, if I have the space, and if the cat seems like it will be a match for my household.

(FS): How do you get the cats adopted?

(ET): Pefinder.com and MCHS website lists photos and bios of adoptable animals, which both get numerous hits. MCHS hosts

adoption events via the Mobile Adoption Unit for foster animals each Saturday and Sunday. Advertising in local newspapers is another resource available to us.

(FS): How long does it take for you to get the cats adopted?

(ET): I've had cats as long as six months, and as short as a week. On average, I have my foster cats for about a month and a half.

(FS): What is your favorite part of fostering?

(ET): Of course, I'd be lying if I said playing with and holding the kittens isn't at the top of the list! But I also enjoy working with the adopters to help them find that special cat that they have been looking for.

(FS): And your least favorite?

(ET): Illness can be worrisome and stressful. Beyond that, watching them leave can be hard.

(FS): You bring up a good point. I think many people who initially express interest in fostering soon shy away because they are scared about getting attached. How do you personally deal with this?

(ET): Animals of any kind have the ability to take hold of our hearts very quickly, so it's natural to get attached. However, seeing the excitement and thrill in the eyes of the adopters makes it a little easier. Sometimes I do get teary-eyed when they leave, but I couldn't possibly keep every kitten that comes through my door, so I know it's an essential part of the process. And knowing that their adoption means I will now have room to take in others that need my help, is comforting, too.

-Foster Care Program Staff

Photos: from top left: Eden Tullius with Lola, adopted on March 2006; bottom right: Vixen.



Visit mchumane.org for more information or to download a foster parent application. To share your story about fostering or for further information about advertising, contact the Foster Care Program. We welcome any and all feedback.

Questions: P: 240-773-5967 E: fosterprogram@hotmail.com

Hours: 9 - 4 p.m. on Wednesday and 9 - 6 p.m. on M, T, TH, FRI, SAT & SUN