

Kimberly Carbone cares about the strays

BY KATHRYN A. BURGER
Of Community Life

TOWNSHIP OF WASHINGTON - There is never a shortage of rescued animals in need of permanent homes. Rescuers who eschew traditional shelters where hundreds of animals are euthanized every year in favor of an organization that has a no-kill policy, know they can count on C.A.T.S. to take in the animals they've rescued.

One such rescuer is Kim Carbone, of the township. This young woman has been officially "rescuing" for about three years, although she actually began as a little girl. "I've always cared for animals and rescued them with my mother since I was a little girl. She'd keep dog biscuits in the glove compartment of the car in case she found a stray."

And while these rescues were to influence her volunteer work as an adult, it was her successful battle against cancer as a youngster that she feels guided her efforts. "I nearly died during a bone marrow transplant in 1992," she said. After her recovery, she said she began wondering why, "she was spared when other kids weren't so fortunate." She believes she found the reason. "Now I know why, and the job I need to do is to take care of God's creatures." That belief is confirmed each time she rescues an animal - and she does it frequently.

The Defining Moment

She said she started rescuing cats in earnest because of a job. "I started a job in Fort Lee and cats were all over, roaming the streets, homeless, abandoned and also in feral colonies. [Feral is used to describe domestic cats that have returned to the "wild" and live without human attention.] Concerned about this and wanting to prevent litters from developing, she did her research on how to go about it and then, she said, she, "went off on my own to save the ones that crossed my path." And that is how it all began. She helped relocate 50 cats that had been living on the former Helmsley property near the George Washington Bridge. "Then, my name and phone number got around and spread like wildfire. When I helped one person, that person gave my number to another in need of help with feral cats."

Feral cats cannot be adopted. The best rescuers can do is "TNR" them - Trap, Neuter, Release. But kittens found with adult feral cats can be. Her connection to C.A.T.S. was solidified when she was called to an apartment complex, again in Fort Lee, to TNR about 30 cats. "I rescued about 20 kittens from there and they were all adopted out by C.A.T.S." She joined C.A.T.S. because, "they are a caring group and they really try to help others."

In all, Carbone has taken care of

close to 200 cats. "Some I've found homes for, some [ferals] have been neutered and secured outdoors with shelter and a steady supply of food."

The Story of Charlie

Carbone shared this story of a recent rescue. An older couple from Hillsdale called the C.A.T.S. Resale Shop and asked for help trapping four kittens, and some feral cats for TNR. "When I got there, there were four four-week-old kittens stuck in between two rotted fences. The mother had hidden them there while she went looking for food. I took them right away but the mother cat saw me so I trapped her, too. I got her spayed and released her back there. The four kittens were adopted out through C.A.T.S."

"But the couple told me told me about another cat. They said he was friendly and always hanging around so they fed him. They said a woman who had lived across the street had been feeding him for about 10 years but she had moved away a few months before. The couple said the cat would wait by their door, waiting to come in, but they didn't want pets in the house. I told them I'd be back for him when I could."

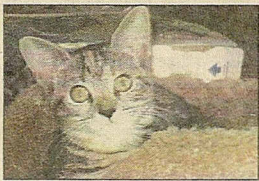
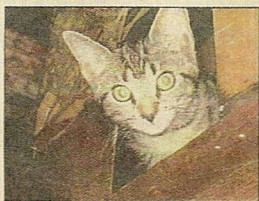
Then, a short time later, she got a call from the couple - something had happened to the cat. His back was raw. They said crows had been swooping down on him, pecking his back and he couldn't fight back. They begged her to come, and, of course, she did.

"I carefully picked him up and brought him to the Bergen Animal Hospital in Teaneck where Dr. [Harriet G.] Lederman took such wonderful care of him." All through the extensive examination - including taking blood and checking his teeth - he was purring. "Dr. Lederman said, 'What a wonderful cat he is! A sweetheart - he was definitely owned by someone.'" She found he'd been neutered, but told Carbone, "He cannot be returned to the outdoors; he is too old and in delicate condition. He won't survive another winter outdoors. If you don't take him, I will"

Dr. Lederman found that he has the feline AIDS virus and hyperthyroidism. Most of his teeth were rotten and had to be pulled. "Charlie" as he is now known, stayed with Dr. Lederman for a month. When Carbone picked him up, she was charged considerably less than the actual cost of Charlie's care. "Dr. Lederman knows I do this out of my own pocket, and heart," Carbone said.

A picture of Charlie and his story were posted on the C.A.T.S. Web site and almost immediately, Carbone got a call from a woman anxious to adopt him even though he was old and had health issues. Car-

SEE STRAYS, PAGE 15



PHOTOS COURTESY OF C.A.T.S.

These three kittens are all available for adoption through Caring About The Strays in Westwood. Call C.A.T.S. at 201-666-5444 for more information.



PHOTO COURTESY OF C.A.T.S.

When Kim Carbone rescued Charlie, he was nearly starved and had wounds on his back from being set upon by crows. Charlie was nursed back to health and for a few days, had a new home with the woman pictured at left in this photo. Unfortunately, Charlie didn't get along with the woman's dogs and now needs a new "forever home." He's extremely affectionate and likes nothing more than having a lap to sleep in. Although he's about 13 years old, and needs medication, Carbone says he's healthy and would make a wonderful pet.

CARING ABOUT THE STRAYS

Walkathon is Saturday, Sept. 30

BY KATHRYN A. BURGER
Of Community Life

Rescuing stray animals comes naturally to some people. There's no choice involved - see a stray, rescue it. With luck, the animal is tagged in some way - a collar with a license or an implanted identification chip. The best outcomes of these rescues are the safe return of beloved pets to grateful owners.

But more often than not, the outcome isn't as happy. Most strays are just that - pets that have been abandoned by uncaring owners, or generations of feral cats that began with abandoned pets.

"Caring About The Strays" - C.A.T.S. - has been finding homes for rescued animals for 12 years and organizers have been raising funds to for a cage-less no-kill animal shelter in the area for just as long. The C.A.T.S. Resale Shop is the most visible example of how the volunteer group has been raising money. It's also the group's unofficial adoption center. On any given day, a number of cats and kittens available for adoption can be found in large, clean and comfortable cages throughout the store. There have been wine-tastings

and auctions, and on Sunday, Sept. 30, the group will hold its 3rd Annual C.A.T.S. Walkathon. Participants are invited with walk on their own or in teams and are welcome to bring their dogs. Registration begins at 9 a.m. at the Westwood train station where coffee and snacks will be available. The 3k walk will begin at 10 a.m. The fundraising event will be held rain or shine and includes crafts, prizes and a 50/50 raffle.

But, as with any volunteer organization, there is always more work than there are willing hands to do it all. Lynn Cancro, who established C.A.T.S., is a tireless animal advocate and her determination and dedication has inspired many people to find the time to help out. Volunteers are always needed to foster a cat or kitten until permanent homes can be found.

There are a number of volunteer opportunities at the shop including sales, and pricing and displaying donated merchandise. Cancro said one cat in particular needs special attention. "He had been in an indoor/outdoor cat but he can't be let out here (at the shop's Kinderkamack Road location). We

put him in a harness and walk him a few times a day. He loves it. We would love people to volunteer just to come down and take him for his walks," she said. "Bernie" is a beautiful white and pale orange cat with an incredibly soft coat. He needs to be adopted by someone who has a fenced yard, Cancro said. During a recent visit to the shop, Bernie was on the alert when someone came in or left the shop. He tried several times to make his getaway - once, successfully, but he didn't get far. Cancro ran after him and snatched him up.

To download a registration form for the walkathon, and learn about more volunteer opportunities and the C.A.T.S. organization, visit www.caringforstrays.org.

The C.A.T.S. Resale Shop is located at 80 Kinderkamack Road, Westwood. It is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Donations of items for resale are accepted daily. For more information, call C.A.T.S. at 201-666-5444.

Kathryn A. Burger's e-mail address is burger@northjersey.com

ADVERTISING 973-569-7295
FAX 973-569-7259
CIRCULATION 201-791-8400
FAX 201-664-3073

CLASSIFIEDS 1-800-472-0161
FAX 973-569-7440
EDITORIAL 201-664-2501
FAX 201-664-1332

pvcommunitylife@northjersey.com

PASADENA VALLEY
Community Life

372 Kinderkamack Road
Westwood, NJ 07675-1600

©2007 North Jersey Media Group Inc.

Pasack Valley Community Life publishes every Wednesday. Offices are located at 372 Kinderkamack Road, Westwood, NJ 07675-1600. Average circulation verified by Certified Audit of Circulation. Subscriptions: \$65 per year via standard mail.

Single copy: 25¢. Postage paid at Closter, NJ 07624. Postmaster: Send address changes to Community Newspapers of North Jersey Media Group, 35 Woodland Ave., Westwood, NJ 07675-3113. We are not responsible for typographical errors.

Photo Reprint Service and PDF Full-Page Sales
We will reprint most staff and freelance photos and PDFs of pages that appeared in this newspaper since 1/1/02. Photos and PDFs are sold for personal use only. All commercial and/or other uses are strictly prohibited and may subject one to civil penalties. Photo prices: \$15 for 5x7, \$25 for 8x10. PDF files: \$30. Prices include sales tax. Call 973-569-7017 or e-mail reprints@northjersey.com