

Our youngest donor

By Sharlene Sallet

Miranda Clack is a special young lady who knows that someday soon she will have a cat of her own. But to an eager 6-year-old whose parents have said the family must wait before bringing a feline companion into the family, a month can seem like a long time. So, Miranda and her family came up with a wonderful idea that gave her the opportunity to help needy cats immediately – for her 7th birthday, she asked her friends to make a donation to the Feline Adoption & Rescue Society in lieu of giving her a gift at her birthday party.

Bill and Holly Clack, Miranda's parents, want to encourage the spirit of giving in their daughter and when they learned about the Feline Adoption and Rescue Society, they felt that it was an organization that Miranda could connect with because she was so fond of cats.

Miranda's friend's families liked the idea, too, and brought donations to Miranda's party for her to bring to FARS.

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Miranda presents Sharlene with donations she collected. *(Photo courtesy of Bill Clack)*



Oatmeal, a unique Siamese mix.
(Sharlene Sallet photo)

Featuring Oatmeal

Who can resist this lovely blue-eyed 15-pound Siamese and dilute calico mix named Oatmeal?

Oatmeal has a mysterious past. She showed up one morning for breakfast in a kind woman's yard and stayed for 3 months. But the woman knew Oatmeal wanted to come inside, and she couldn't keep her. Oatmeal was turned in to a local humane society, which tried unsuccessfully to find Oatmeal's owner.

So, Oatmeal came to FARS Adoption Center, where she's shown her big personality. Outgoing and craving attention, she has been busy making friends with the volunteers.

Oatmeal likes to play and be petted but will let you know when she has had enough and wants time to herself.

Would you like to meet Oatmeal? Stop by our Framingham Adoption Center.

What's in a name?

By Crystal Carvotta-Brown

“That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.”

– Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, 1594

We've all heard the phrase. But what does it really mean? It means that names don't matter – only who you are. For Rosie, being who she is, is what matters most.

Rosie came to FARS in August 2009. She was abandoned in an apartment when her elderly owner was moved into an assisted living facility, and the owner's son chose not to come back for Rosie. FARS sent a volunteer to meet and evaluate Rosie.

At the evaluation, Rosie showed her mellow and affectionate personality. She rubbed against the volunteer's legs, loved to be stroked and purred like a motor boat. Rosie seemed like she would, “blossom” in FARS Adoption Centers.

Once Rosie was treated for fleas and updated on vaccinations, she was ready to be moved into our Adoption Center in Cambridge.

This is when things started to fall apart for Rosie. She didn't like other cats. This presented many challenges for her at the Adoption Center, where she was in the company of many other cats. Even though she had her own space, she was still exposed to the sights, sounds and smells of other felines.

This predicament made Rosie quite unhappy. She became uncomfortable and began to hiss and swat at the volunteers who cared for her. Gone was the Rosie who craved attention and purred. And Rosie was doing everything but blossoming.

In Rosie's best interest, our Shelter Director determined that Rosie would do best in a foster home, where she could be an only cat. True to form, Rosie flourished with her foster family. She fit in quickly and settled back into the Rosie we first met.

Regrettably, because this foster family was going on vacation, there was a definite “end date” to the time that they could care for her. Rosie then went to a new foster home, where again she fit in very quickly. Shortly afterwards, however, this wonderful foster mom, Erin – one of FARS Cat Caregiver volunteers – adopted two kittens from FARS. So Rosie went back to the shelter due to a lack of another foster home.

In October, Rosie was featured in our newsletter, but still time dragged on, with Rosie being segregated from other



Rosie, looking wise and regal.
(Photo courtesy of Amy Pacheco)

shelter cats as best as possible. The good part about being at the shelter rather than in foster care is that cats get better exposure to potential adopters. The tough part – at least for cats like Rosie – is the company of other felines. So, if Rosie could just “stick it out” in the shelter long enough to find her new family, we just knew she would find her home.

And then, just like that, it happened. At the end of January, in came Rose to the Adoption Center. Yes, Rose really is her name. Rose had been shopping at Whole Foods Market and decided to take a walk down to Staples, when she saw FARS “Come See the Cats” sign outside of PetSmart.

Rose, who had spent many years rescuing Afghan Hounds, knew she wanted to have a pet again, but thought it would be best to have a cat, since she tended to work longer hours. Rose had not had a cat in many years, and knew it would be an adjustment.

After spending time with the cats in the Adoption Center, Rose knew she was going to adopt Rosie. She went home for a few days to think it over, so that she would be sure it was the right time for her to adopt a cat. A few days later, Rose returned to take Rosie home.

Fortunately, good things do come to those who wait. This adoption could not have been a better match. Long-haired Rosie loves to be brushed, and who better to be adopted by than someone who used to brush two Afghan Hounds on a daily basis?

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All about your cat's microchip

By Sharlene Sallet

Often, in the excitement of preparing to bring home a new kitty, adopters overlook the details associated with their cat's microchip.

The details of microchips, registration and memberships can be confusing because there are several microchip vendors, pet recovery services and microchip scanners on the market. While the process for recovering pets via the microchip is still imperfect, it's one of the most effective ways of reuniting a lost pet with his family.

It is very important to us at FARS that your cat stays safe and can be reunited with you if he gets lost. That's why we microchip our cats. Microchips have been particularly useful in the return of lost pets to their families.

Microchipping is also important to animal welfare. Animal shelters and animal control facilities can return pets to their owners more quickly and efficiently when the animals are microchipped. When a pet can be quickly matched to his owner, shelters avoid the expense of housing, feeding, providing medical care and re-homing the pet. The tragedy of destroying the pet can also be avoided.

How it works

A microchip is about the size of a large grain of rice and contains a unique number. The chip is implanted under the cat's skin in the area of the shoulder blades.

If your cat is lost or stolen, and taken to a shelter or animal control, he will be scanned. If a microchip is found, the person in charge calls the recovery service and provides the ID number, the pet's description and location.

The snags

Problems can occur in reconnecting a lost pet with his family. A shelter or animal control worker may not scan an animal, therefore his chip may go undetected. The facility where the cat is taken may not have a scanner. Shelter workers may call the recovery service of the chip's vendor (which can be identified by many scanners or by online software), but the microchip may be registered with a different recovery service. This can happen because many microchip recovery services will allow chips of any vendor to be registered with them.

Our commitment to helping lost cats get home

At FARS, microchipping is included in our adoption fee. When one of our cats is adopted, FARS registers the chip using the contact information the adopter provided us. FARS uses HomeAgain microchips. We have enrolled all cats we adopted out with HomeAgain's recovery service.

In addition to providing the pet's lifetime registration in the recovery service, adopters receive the first year of HomeAgain's additional membership benefits, which includes lost pet medical insurance, pet travel assistance, a 24/7 pet emergency hotline and lost pet alerts. It is the responsibility of the adopter to renew these membership benefits after a year.

You can learn more about these services on HomeAgain's website at <http://public.homeagain.com/membership-services.html>.

Important note: Even if you choose not to renew the membership, your cat will continue to be registered in the recovery database for his entire life.

Some cats brought to FARS Adoption Centers had a different company's microchip (either 24PetWatch or AVID). FARS enrolled those chips in HomeAgain's recovery service because it offers the additional membership services we mentioned before.

FARS has re-evaluated this policy and, effective March 1, 2010, will register each cat's microchip with the recovery service of the vendor that manufactured the chip. This means that, if a cat comes to us with an AVID microchip, we will register that cat with AVID's recovery service. If another vendor's microchip is implanted in the cat, we will notify the adopter of which recovery service we will register the cat with. We believe this new policy will help eliminate confusion about which recovery service to call when a cat is found.

FARS will continue to use HomeAgain microchips for cats who come into the shelter without a chip.

Follow-up with the microchip company

If you have adopted a cat from FARS and are unsure about which vendor manufactured your cat's microchip or who the chip is registered with, contact FARS at info@felineadoptions.org.

We recommend that you call the recovery service to verify that your cat was properly registered. Within a month after the adoption, you should receive an e-mail (or regular mail if you didn't provide an e-mail address) from the recovery service. It's important that you follow up with the recovery service if you don't receive this notification.

When you call, make sure that the information in the recovery service's database is up to date. Otherwise, the microchip becomes useless because there will be no way to find you in case your cat gets lost. Update your cat's

All about your cat's microchip continued on page 4.

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The Clack family then visited FARS Framingham Adoption Center, where Miranda presented Executive Director, Sharlene Sallet, with \$125.00 in donations that she had collected to help the cats.

While the family was at the Adoption Center, they were able to meet and play with the cats who are waiting for homes and will benefit from Miranda's generous donation. And Miranda knows that one day soon she will be able to visit again and take home a new family member.

All about your cat's microchip continued from page 3.

records with the recovery service every time you move, change phone numbers or change e-mail addresses. The contact phone numbers for three popular microchip companies are listed below.

If your cat goes missing, contact the recovery service immediately to see if your cat has been found. If not, ask if they will send out an alert to their affiliated pet rescuers with your cat's photo. (They may require you to pay an annual membership fee for this benefit).

Get your cat a collar with ID tag

Because microchips are not infallible, keeping a current ID tag around your cat's neck is a great way to increase your chances of finding him if he gets lost. Remember to use a "safety" break-away collar. This way, you allow your cat to escape the collar if he gets it caught. An ID tag with your phone number provides the means for someone who finds your cat to reach you quickly!

Please report any problems you encounter regarding our microchipping process to us at info@felineadoptions.org.

HomeAgain: 1-888-466-3242
AVID: 1-800-336-2843
24PetWatch: 1-866-597-2424

Current Cat Sponsors

We want to thank our generous Cat Sponsors for their kind support of the cats in our shelters.

Stefan Cover – Jamie, Mouse, May

Anonymous – Kelly, Piggie, Ms. Tiger

Paula Pasquantonio – Oatmeal

Cynthia Holladay – Willow

To become a Cat Sponsor please e-mail us at sponsor@felineadoptions.org.

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Rosie's new mom describes brushing her pets as therapeutic and something she looks forward to when she gets home from work. Rose has also come to learn that Rosie is very much like an Afghan Hound in that she is very independent although she loves to be given love and affection. Ironically, Afghan Hounds are often described as "cats in dog suits" or "catlike" in characteristic.

Rosie now spends her days being the queen of the palace. She has the run of a very large house and a perch that overlooks the backyard, where she takes in nature at its finest. There, birds, squirrels and wildlife abound, keeping Rosie entertained.

Because Rosie's mom's name is Rose, she decided to make a slight change to her new kitty's name. Rosie is now called Rozie – with a "z" – so she hasn't had to get used to a new name, just a new spelling.

Adoption Centers

Cambridge PetSmart

(Fresh Pond Mall)
160 Alewife Brook Pkwy
Cambridge, MA

Adoption Hours

Monday 6-9 p.m.
Tuesday 6-9 p.m.
Wednesday 5-9 p.m.
Saturday 12-5 p.m.
Sunday 12-4 p.m.

Framingham PetSmart

(Shopper's World Mall)
1 Worcester Road
Framingham, MA

Adoption Hours

Monday 5-9 p.m.
Tuesday 5-9 p.m.
Thursday 5-9 p.m.
Saturday 12-5 p.m.
Sunday 12-4 p.m.

FARS is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization and donations are tax deductible. Our tax ID# is 20-1033049.

Donations can be made online at: www.felineadoptions.org.

If you prefer to mail a check, please make it payable to Feline Adoption & Rescue Society and mail to P.O. Box 2163, Natick, MA 01760.



Cat Chat is the Feline Adoption & Rescue Society's (FARS) monthly newsletter. FARS is a nonprofit charity. Its mission is to ensure the health and welfare of homeless cats and kittens in Massachusetts by providing humane, life-saving services.

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