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AFL News

Advocating for Animals in our Community



Judy Schachner reads to a packed audience.

Skippyjon Jones and His Creator Delight Fans With Latest Book

It was a wondrous afternoon when Skippyjon Jones flew in with his high wire act to entertain a room filled with young readers at the Lansdowne Public Library on Feb. 3. The crowd-pleasing event was part of Animal Friends of Lansdowne's



annual Love Your Pets Month presentation. The latest adventures of Skippyjon Jones, the wild and personable little cat who fancies himself a Chihuahua, came to life in the new book "Skippyjon Jones: Cirque de Ole," as read by creator, Judy Schachner, a well-known

author who lives in Swarthmore. Schachner has written a character whose secret life entertains all who know of him, and judging from the full house at this reading, this series has many fans.

Skippyjon, that bed-bouncing, high-wire acrobat (the squirrels taught him!) carried on, accompanied by "oohs" and "ahhs" from the enraptured children. Skippyjon took them to the circus with him, presented them with his Trembling Tower of Power, and, to the sound of audience-supplied drumrolls, was even shot from a cannon! Can you imagine the excitement (and you must imagine, because it all happened in the fuzzy head of a very

(Skippyjon Jones—continued on Page 6)

From the President



As we begin another kitten season at Animal Friends of Lansdowne, I am struck with a special tenderness for the adult

cats we've rescued that are still waiting to be adopted. Most of the kittens we rescue this year will be adopted quickly—after all, who can resist those tiny, mewling balls of fluff? But we have several adult cats that are still young at heart and just as ready for the love and the security of a furr-ever family. Many of these cats are shy when first meeting strangers, but once they warm up to new people like their foster caregivers, they are affectionate, loyal companions. Here are a few reasons that cats, like wine, can be even better with age.

Older cats have already graduated from “Kitty Bootcamp.” Adult cats are more likely to know proper kitty etiquette: They use scratching posts (and not furniture) for claw maintenance and stretching; they understand that toys, not people, are for biting; and they've learned how to keep themselves groomed and clean. Even better, adult cats already know how to use the litter box and are much less likely to forget where it is or to not make it in time, unlike kittens who are still learning those skills. Mature cats also have much longer attention spans and better impulse control, which makes it easier to develop new habits once they've moved into a new home. And although all cats are curious, older cats are less likely to get into messy mischief out of boredom, have learned acceptable ways to

entertain themselves, and can just sit back and relax with their human companions.

With adult cats, you know what you're getting. Adopters of adult cats already know the full size of the cat, as well as the cat's basic personality, including his or her quirks (and all cats have quirks). AFL can also provide a more accurate assessment of the cat's health and medical history.

Adult cats also tend to be better with children, seniors, those with disabilities, and people on the go. Whereas kittens are more likely to get hurt by rough-housing kids, an adult cat knows where to hide and how to get out of the way when necessary. And because they are calmer and less destructive, they make better companions for seniors and people with disabilities. For people who are only home in the evenings or on weekends, an adult cat (or two) are less likely to get too lonely or bored and act out, whereas kittens need more constant attention and supervision.

Finally, adult cats are grateful. Many adult cats seem to understand that they've been rescued. They are often starved for love, especially if they've been abandoned by their previous owners. Sometimes these older cats can be timid and shy with new people because they've learned to be cautious with who they trust, but for the adopter who invests time into assimilating an older cat into their home in a patient and loving manner, they will find a loyal and affectionate companion for life.

Dawn Manning 🐾

Putting the 'Rescue' in Animal Rescue

Animal Friends of Lansdowne volunteers and supporters have had a busy year! Although we primarily focus on helping stray and abandoned cats in the Lansdowne area, here are a few other things we've been up to:

- Took in two adult guinea pigs discovered in Sycamore Park one morning. The abandoned guinea pigs, which had obviously been someone's pets, are being fostered until an adopter can be found.
- Found help for a badly injured squirrel found on Greenwood Avenue. Unfortunately, the squirrel, which may have been shot by a BB gun and possibly run over by a car, could not be saved and was humanely euthanized. It took a group effort to find a local squirrel expert and transport the squirrel.
- Shared our expertise to help bring a kitty dubbed Climber, who was stranded in a tall tree for several days without food or water, safely back to earth.
- Helped spread the word about lost dogs in the area and find new homes for dogs whose elderly owners could no longer care for them.

To all our volunteers and supporters who extend a helping hand, we thank you from the tips of our paws to the depths of our hearts. Be sure to “like” AFL on Facebook to keep up with all of our animal rescue efforts. You might even be able to help! 🐾

Make Way for Kittens!

Spring is kitten season and you know what that means...

Kittens arrive all year long but with Spring comes kitten season, when many baby cats are born and need our help to become healthy, loving pets. Kitten season places great demands on Animal Friends of Lansdowne's resources—both human and financial, and it seems that each year the challenge is ever greater.

However, the rewards are enormous. Working with kittens (Really? This is work?) is what AFL calls “kitten therapy.” It's tough to feel bad about anything when you're playing with kittens! There is something so instantly healing about cuddling these little balls of fluff and watching their clumsy and determined antics, that we defy anyone not to smile and feel hopeful in their presence.

Rescue 101

So how does kitten rescue work? Kittens come to us in a variety of ways. When we're lucky, they come with a mom who is friendly, and available to nurse and nurture them into healthy kittenhood. The kittens and their mothers are placed safely in a foster home until they can be weaned and adopted out to good homes.

But sometimes, kittens are found as orphans and they need special care. If too young to eat on their own, the kittens must be bottle fed until they can. This is a specialized and demanding, but gratifying, job that includes frequent, regular feedings just like with human babies.



AFL volunteer Margaret Mercik with a furry friend.

Often, kittens are born outside to feral moms whose care is needed to give them a good start in life. In such cases we want to provide a warm, safe outdoor place for mom and babies until the kittens are weaned and can be brought into foster care to be socialized and prepared for adoption. If the mother is feral, we will have her spayed to prevent future litters, then return her to her outdoor home to be cared for by volunteers.

The optimal window for socialization of kittens is up to eight weeks of age. Between eight weeks and four months, socialization is more difficult and requires special knowledge, time, and a great deal of patience. Past four months of age, socialization is even harder and not usually recommended. In such cases, returning feral kittens to live in their colony is a more realistic outcome.

Kittenhood is a very brief period in the life cycle of cats—up to one year. Still, kittens are always in demand by adopters who want to experience that time of incomparable cuteness and raise their kitty from a tender age. But it's important to remember that this is a time of climbing curtains and “kitten crazies,” so an adult cat may be more in keeping with your current lifestyle.

How You Can Help

There are myriad ways for you to help and enjoy some kitten therapy. AFL is always in need of foster homes for cats and kittens. What you provide: a safe room secluded from other pets, food and litter, time and love to start them on their way to happy lives. What AFL provides: all vet care and even help with food and supplies when needed.

Can't foster now? Consider visiting kittens to help socialize them, or caring for them at our adoption center at Petco in Clifton Heights. Donating money and supplies and volunteering at adoption events is helpful, too. Adopting harder-to-adopt adult cats and encouraging others to do so is a huge help as well.

For further information, please visit our web site at www.animalfriendsoflansdowne.com. 🐾

Residents Learn to Build Shelters At Friends of Community Cats Workshop



Workshop participants learn how to make a shelter for our community cats.

Animal Friends of Lansdowne hosted our first *Friends of Community Cats Workshop* at Lansdowne Borough Hall on Oct. 20, 2012. More than 60 people attended, some coming from as far away as North Philadelphia to learn about Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) and to help build shelters for our community cats, also known as feral cats, which are too wild and afraid of people to be adopted.

Participants learned that community cats in the area are comprised of both feral and friendly stray cats, and that the best way to help them while preventing overpopulation is through TNR: the humane practice of trapping cats, taking them to a veterinarian to be examined, vaccinated and neutered, and then returning them to their outdoor home after a period of recovery. Not only does TNR stop the breeding cycle, but it prevents the spread of diseases, improves the health and stability of community cats, and squelches unpleasant mating behaviors such as marking, fighting, yowling, and roaming. To learn more about TNR and see videos on the TNR process, please visit Alley Cat Allies at www.alleycats.org.

Participants offered enthusiasm and a lot of positive feedback. It is clear that the Lansdowne community is made up of individuals who are ready to step up and make a difference for our community cats. One of the great resources participants learned about is The Spayed Club. This non-profit organization in Sharon Hill allows individuals interested in performing TNR to register as a trapper and receive a discounted feral cat package that includes spay/neuter, vaccines, flea treat-

ment and ear-tipping for just \$30 per cat. The Spayed Club offers educational materials on TNR and other aspects of animal care and even lends out traps for a refundable deposit. To learn more about The Spayed Club and their extensive list of services, please visit their website at www.thespayedclubclinic.org or call 484-540-8436.

Shelter Building

In one of the most exciting aspects of the workshop, participants were able to gain hands-on experience building outdoor, weatherproof shelters for our community cats. Everyone jumped right in under the guidance of AFL volunteers, and even one of the videographers filming the workshop put down his camera to help construct these life-saving shelters.

As a result, AFL was able to place six shelters in four different locations around Lansdowne to help see our community cats through the winter.

A Call for Fosters

The workshop also covered the need for foster homes for adoptable community cats. When AFL volunteers engage in TNR, we often come across friendly strays or kittens who are candidates to be rescued and brought indoors. Our ability to rescue cats, however, is completely dependent upon having enough foster homes to place them in.

A foster is someone who takes a friendly rescued cat into their home temporarily. All fostering requires is a spare room (bedroom, office, or even a decent-sized bathroom) to house the cat while he or she awaits adoption. Fosters also provide a little time and love each day to socialize the cat and teach them good kitty behavior. AFL covers the vet bills for fostered animals, so it really is just a matter of providing food, water, litter, and a little space and time. To find out more about becoming a foster, please visit animalfriendsoflansdowne.com.

The Friends of Community Cats Workshop was a big win for the greater Lansdowne community. Not only did attendees learn that TNR is a community effort, but they received the education and training to go make a difference themselves. Thanks to all those who participated in this workshop. To keep up to date with AFL's latest workshops and projects, please sign up for our e-mails or follow us on Facebook. 🐾

Join the Animal Cruelty-Free Movement with These Products

As an Animal Friend you may be interested to know that 94 percent of animal testing is in the cosmetics, toiletries and household/garden product industries. This occurs despite the fact that an animal's reaction to a product often differs greatly from a human's, which impacts the accuracy of animal testing. Cosmetic testing is banned in the entire European Union but still exists in the United States and is actually mandatory in China. Substances we use every day such as eye shadow, soap, furniture polish, and bleach may be tested on rats, rabbits, guinea pigs, dogs, cats, and other animals. Many are bred for this purpose or pulled from shelters.

These tests are mainly used to gauge the degree of harmfulness of products and their ingredients. Each year in the U.S., millions of animals are maimed, blinded, scalded, or force-fed chemicals without pain relief. It's impossible to know exactly how many animals are tested because the U.S. Drug Administration does not require labs to report how many birds, reptiles, or rodents (this includes rabbits) they use. *Half of the animals used in cosmetic testing die within three weeks of the experiment.*

You can make a difference by avoiding products that test on animals or use ingredients derived from animals. Look for labels that state that the product and none of its ingredients are tested on animals.

The following are a few cruelty-free product lines:

Beauty/Hygiene products. Arbonne, Paul Mitchell, Beauty Without Cruelty, Clean Kids Naturally, Kiss my Face (including toothpaste and deodorant), Urban Decay cosmetics, and Smashbox.



Cinnamon, who needs a home, knows you'll do the right thing!



Kittens like Basil (who was recently adopted) benefit from cruelty-free products.

Home cleaning products. Seventh Generation, Mrs. Meyer's Clean Day, and Earth Friendly Products.

Pet Products. Natural Balance pet foods, Halo Purely for Pets, and Rosie's Remedies (pet supplies such as flea treatments)

For a complete list, visit www.leapingbunny.org and look for their logo when shopping. You can also order a free shopping guide from PETA on their website at www.peta.org.



For online one-stop-shopping cruelty-free and vegan products, check out these sites: www.veganstore.com or www.veganessentials.com. Locally, there are many cruelty-free and vegan products at Martindale's Natural Market (Olde Sproul Shopping Village on Baltimore Pike) in Springfield and Life More Abundant on Lansdowne Ave. in Lansdowne. Harvest Local Foods in Lansdowne also offers some vegan options. 🐾

'In Loving Memory Of...'

Thanks to a suggestion from one of our favorite Animal Friends, you can now make a PayPal donation to Animal Friends of Lansdowne in memory of a loved one or a beloved pet. Visit: <http://www.animalfriendsoflansdowne.org/donate.shtml> then scroll down to the "donate" button. After you enter your information for PayPal or credit card, you will have the option to make your donation in memory of a person or pet. A field will be available to enter his or her name. AFL will post a remembrance on our Facebook page (unless you specify otherwise). 🐾



Remember your furry friend with a donation to Animal Friends of Lansdowne..

(Skippyjon Jones—continued from Page 1)

crazy little cat), that rascal gave everyone at the library that day? And the consternation he caused his human mama? We all fell hard for Mr. Skippyjon Jones.

Children and adults alike were charmed by Skippyjon Jones' Spanish accent, his fearless and



The author signs books for some of her devoted readers.



AFL celebrates Karen DiTomo's award.

2013 Animal Friend of the Year is Honored

Animal Friends of Lansdowne honored Karen DiTomo with its Animal Friend of the Year Award for all her hard work facilitating cat and kitten adoptions, advising on a variety of animal rescue issues, and taking on many behind-the-scenes tasks that keep the group running. AFL gave her the award during the Skippyjon Jones book reading and signing for February Is Love Your Pets Month at the Lansdowne Public Library. From left, Adrienne Patroni, Fran Wayne, Samantha Drake, Karen DiTomo, Dotti McCreary, Sara Burns, and Dawn Manning, celebrate Karen's award.

unfettered energy, and his irresistible good looks. "Cirque de Ole" was available for purchase at the reading, as was the first book in the Skippyjon Jones series. Schachner, who also illustrates the books, signed each book with a personal message and a doodle.

The book reading was a treat for all present, and reminded us how artistry, imagination, and our love for animals can come together for a good cause, and create some very happy memories. Proceeds from the sale of books at this event benefited Animal Friends of Lansdowne. 🐾



Fans of Skippyjon Jones are ready to read about his latest adventure.



Look who stopped by! The Hills Ideal Balance truck was in town and donated pet food to AFL

Friends School Hosts AFL's Doggie Spa Day

Some things never change: Dogs are always going to need a bath. But one thing did change this year, and that's where Animal Friends of Lansdowne held its annual Doggie Spa Day.

On Saturday, June 8, at the Lansdowne Friends School at 110 N. Lansdowne Ave., dozens of dogs enjoyed the luxury of a bath and/or nail trim. Short hairs, long hairs, Italian Bull Mastiffs, Jugs and all dogs in between had a rousing good time! Join us next June for this annual event. 🐾



Bargain hunters uncover treasures at AFL yard sale.

AFL Annual Yard Sale Raises Record Amount

Animal Friends of Lansdowne's annual yard sale on May 18 was the best one yet! An avalanche of generous donations to sell and a team of volunteers to coordinate it all made the day fun and profitable. Big thanks to our donors and volunteers! 🐾

Become a Member of AFL

Membership Type: Qty Price: Total:

— Good Friend		\$30 / year	
— Family Friend		\$50 / year	
— Special Friend		\$75 / year	
— Best Friend		\$100 / year	
— Student Friend (full-time student)		\$20 / year	
— Senior Friend (65 or older)		\$20 / year	
— Young Friend (12 and under)		\$10 / year	
— Forever Friend		\$500	

Check here if you would like to volunteer: Total: _____

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Enclose check made payable to:
AFL
and send to the following address:
Animal Friends of Lansdowne
Post Office Box 869
Lansdowne, PA 19050
or sign up on the web at



AFL T-shirts, mugs, and bumper stickers on sale now at animalfriendsofLansdowne.com

Save the Date!

AFL at Dog Day at the Farmers Market

Saturday, September 28, 2013

9:00 am — 1:00 pm

AFL Member Meetings

Usually the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm

Lansdowne Borough Hall

Please contact us for exact dates and times.

Animal Friends of Lansdowne

Post Office Box 869

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About AFL News

AFL News is a newsletter published by the Animal Friends of Lansdowne, an organization comprised of Lansdowne citizens who are passionate about animals and animal issues. We are concerned about the responsible management of our domestic and feral animals and about making Lansdowne a safe haven for people and animals to live in harmony.

To this end, we are committed to such issues as animal rescue and adoption, population control, health and sanitation, education and awareness, and, always, the humane treatment of all animals.

AFL Mission Statement

Our mission is to advocate for animals in our community and for the people who care for and about them; to raise awareness of important animal issues through educational and promotional activities; and to foster the kind and responsible stewardship of both domestic and feral animals.

Contributors for this issue of AFL News:

Jocelyn Bolick, Sara Burns, Samantha Drake, Dawn

Manning, Hazel Spears, Amanda Villier, and Fran Wayne

For the latest news, be sure to visit our website at AnimalFriendsofLansdowne.com.



Board Members:

Dawn Manning, President

Samantha Drake, Vice President

Fran Wayne, Secretary

Adrienne Patroni, Treasurer

Dotti McCreary, Education Chair