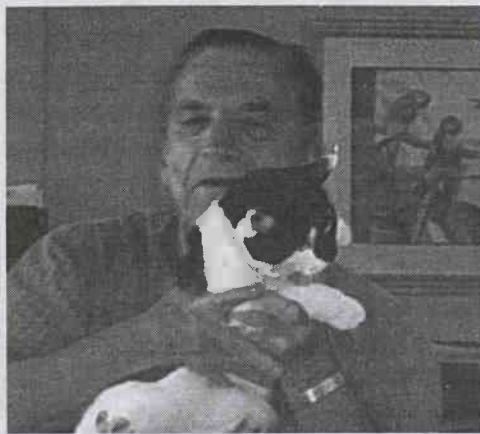


Man's Best Friend Could Be a Cat

By Barbara Milhaven

Do you have a heart AND a home to share with a cat or a kitten? Don Smith a truly civic minded, altruistic neighbor has been working diligently for many years to rescue the stray, feral cat population in our area. Don and other members of PAWS provide food and water, often at their own expense, to feral cat colonies while in the process of humanely trapping them, getting them vetted and finding homes for them. Don indicates that it is increasingly difficult to find people willing to give a cat or tamed kitten a home in Pine Knoll Shores. So much so that of late the only humane solution has been to find barns in surrounding areas willing to take a cat/kitten in order to keep their barn rodent free.

A few years ago a lone kitten was discovered on the roadside edge of our property and eluded capture by escaping into our wooded area. This was late



Don Smith with Cat

November and already getting cold. Not long after, a mother cat looking very much like this stray kitten brought a litter of kittens to the foot of a tree next to our back porch. We discovered these teeny, tiny kittens only because the mother cat kept pacing back and forth from our back door to the edge of the porch and we eventually got the idea she wanted us to follow her. As the weather was getting colder each passing day, we took to leaving food and water on the porch next to the tree.

Bad, bad idea, although well meaning, on our part. Well this might have been o.k. if we had remembered to take the food in each night. Soon we had numerous collarless cats, we presumed were stray, raccoons and possums eating along with the mother cat. We had as well, some pretty loud cat-fighting going on during the night hours.

Calls for help were made to various veterinarians, animal organizations and the Carteret County Animal Control agency. Aside from some do it yourself suggestions we found little in the way of direct help and waited for the kittens to grow old enough to be safely taken from the mother cat. They certainly provided a great deal of entertainment for us as we watched and waited. They were adorable, black and white and all black, fluffy, playful kitties. They had a very good mother and one or two of

the stray fellows could have been DAD!

Don came with food, humane traps and good albeit costly advice. Don suggested that we prop open the door to our screened in porch, place the food inside when the kittens were able to eat commercial cat food and eventually trap them all inside by closing the door. Then he would come and help us trap them and PAWS would take over, tame them and hopefully find good homes for them. Well this really did work and I believe all of the kittens were eventually placed. Unfortunately for the Milhavens the mother

cat really panicked and went right through the screen, necessitating some major repair work. Mother cat is now Mommy Kat Milhaven (we are sometimes rather simplistic and non creative in the naming of our feline companions) and the continuing saga of what happened to her firstborn must wait for another time.

Cats make fairly undemanding pets and can provide companionship and comfort particularly to older citizens. So perhaps you would like to get on board and contact PAWS of which Don Smith is a board member. Don and other PAWS members often pay out of pocket for food and vetting the captured cats and kittens. PAWS operates a thrift shop located at 1211 Bridges Street in Morehead City and can be reached by calling 247-3341. Donations made to PAWS as well as your patronage at their thrift shop will help.

Mary Jo Jennings Named Secretary of CCMCPD

By Dick Reeves

Mary Jo Jennings of PKS has been named secretary of the Carteret County Mayors' Committee for Persons with Disabilities. In her new post, Ms. Jennings will share responsibilities with long-time Chair Elaine Tempel.

The committee dates back to October 1985 when the Morehead City Council approved the creation of a Mayors' Committee for employment of the handicapped and set the first full week of October as "Hire the Handicapped" week.

All the major towns in our area are represented on the present committee. Pine Knoll Shores participants have been especially active in hurricane evacuation of the handicapped and in beach access for people in wheel chairs. Where it once was almost impossible for these citizens to enjoy our beaches and situms, a special series of ramps and boardwalks, constructed by volunteers from our local high schools, now make it relatively easy for those in wheelchairs to transfer from their vans to the beach or situms.

In our community especially, the committee does a great deal to brighten the lives of

our rapidly-increasing elderly population. In concert with our police, fire and EMS personnel, the CCMCPD volunteers serve as liaison to ensure the safety, comfort and quality of life of our elderly and infirm.

The committee also sponsors a bi-annual disability awards banquet. This year, the ceremony will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Oct. 20 at the Leon Mann Enrichment Center in Morehead City. In addition to the Mayors, Commissioners and municipal staffs, all citizens are invited to submit nominations for awards and to attend the banquet. Cost will be around \$10. If you know of an outstanding volunteer in the areas of community leadership, education, professional work, employer, disabled youth or adult, you are invited to submit his or her name before Friday Sept. 23. Official ballots may be secured from any member of the committee, from town hall or from: mayorscommittee@hotmail.com.

If you know of any disabled or elderly persons who need help or if you would like to volunteer to help the committee, extra hands and minds are always needed and welcomed.

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