



Critters

Our Pets

They fill our lives with unconditional love and wonder and whimsy and devotion. All they ask in return is... Nothing.



Rescued animals, a part of the family

By EMILY WEAVER
Editor

There is a special bond that exists between a family and its pets. It's seen in the loyalty of a dog that refuses to leave its master's side. Or in the movements of a cat that knows it really "rules the nest".

Often furry and four-legged these favored friends become more like family members, showing up just when we need them.

But oftentimes, these pets need us even more. That was the case in the Ruff house. On one stormy night a very pregnant feline made her way to the home of June and Abraham Ruff's daughter, who all live near each other in Kings Mountain.

June and her daughter found the cat on the front porch. A hard rain was falling and the cat was ready to deliver.

They helped birth the litter and one by one, though they may not have known it at the time, the Ruffs brought their new family members into the world and onto their porch.

One was sick. "He was real cold," June said.

She feared he wouldn't make it so she took him into the bathroom and gently, with a towel, tried to warm him. The little kitten pulled through and was named Fred. His other siblings born that night were Ethel, Snowball and Butterball.

They were born to Mama Casper and



Felix, far left, looks over the litter, left to right, Ethel, Fred (both in front), Snowball, Butterball and Mama Casper.

for quite a while they all stayed together with the Ruff family. Mama Casper was spayed, but she has since left the bunch.

The Ruffs had rescued two other cats from a place in Gaffney before the new litter arrived. One of the cats, named Felix, stepped in as "guardian" of the kittens. The other, named Muffin seems to prefer the company of Abraham Ruff and their two dogs - also rescued.

"Muffin doesn't care much for the kittens," June laughed.

When Mr. Ruff goes for a walk, it's become a common sight to see him being trailed by their dogs Beethoven and Rufus...and Muffin, the calico cat.

The felines have been divided be-

tween June and her daughter. June took Fred, the one she saved, and Snowball because she always wanted a white cat. (Snowball's coat has changed a bit since she was born.)

Her daughter, who takes care of Felix, also took Ethel and Butterball. But it's still, as the saying goes, "one big, happy family" since the Ruffs and their daughter live close enough for all the cats to see each other.

They could have taken Mama Casper and the kittens to the pound when they were born or they could have tried to give them away, but they decided to keep them - a choice June said she can't regret. They're family after all.

PET OF THE MONTH



June Ruff's great granddaughter Khloe Riddle pets Ethel. June and Abraham Ruff and their daughter, rescued a very pregnant mother cat from a rainstorm and helped her give birth that very night to four kittens, including Ethel.

Would you like to see your pet as our Pet of the Month?

Just send us a picture of you and your pet. Tell us why your pet is special or how you & your pet found each other, etc.

Each month we will choose one pet and its person to be featured on our Critters page.

All entries will be included in a drawing at the end of the year for a prize for your pet.

It's easy: Email your photo and information to us at pets.kmherald@gmail.com. Please include your name and phone number so we may contact you.

Keep your pets safe in the heat

by Heather Mauney Dover
Washin' Up Pups
Kings Mountain

Now that it is May, I know everyone including myself is thinking about summer, vacations and kids out of school. Here are a few simple tips and reminders to keep your pets safe and happy.

As the temperature rises along with the humidity, be sure your pet has plenty of fresh clean water. Also, shade; yes as we do, your pets can get sunburned, especially if they have been clipped down shorter for the warmer weather.

If traveling with your pet, be it either across town or miles away, keep in mind it can quickly reach to 120 degrees or hotter inside your car even in the shade. And if they are on the back of a truck be sure they are properly secured because they can easily jump off.

When taking pets for a walk, try to keep it in the early morning or late evening especially if you have an older dog, a dog with a double coat, or a dog

with a short muzzle. When walking keep a check on the pads of their feet as they too can burn on the hot cement.

Weather you have an inside or outside pet be sure to get a flea and tick preventative product, one that is purchased from your vet is always the safest choice.

If you are taking your pet for a swim in your pool or at the lake be sure that they are up for the swim as older dogs tire easily and younger ones may get out to far an unable to return safely.

A life jacket is always a good choice, if they will be joining you on the boat. Hope you and your pet have a safe and wonderful summer.

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